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Video

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NOVEMBER 1986

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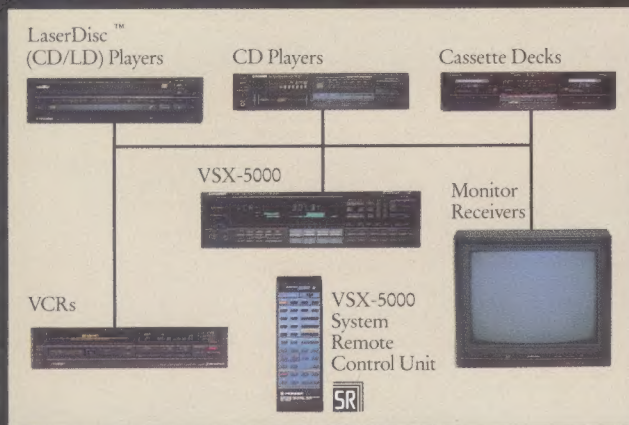
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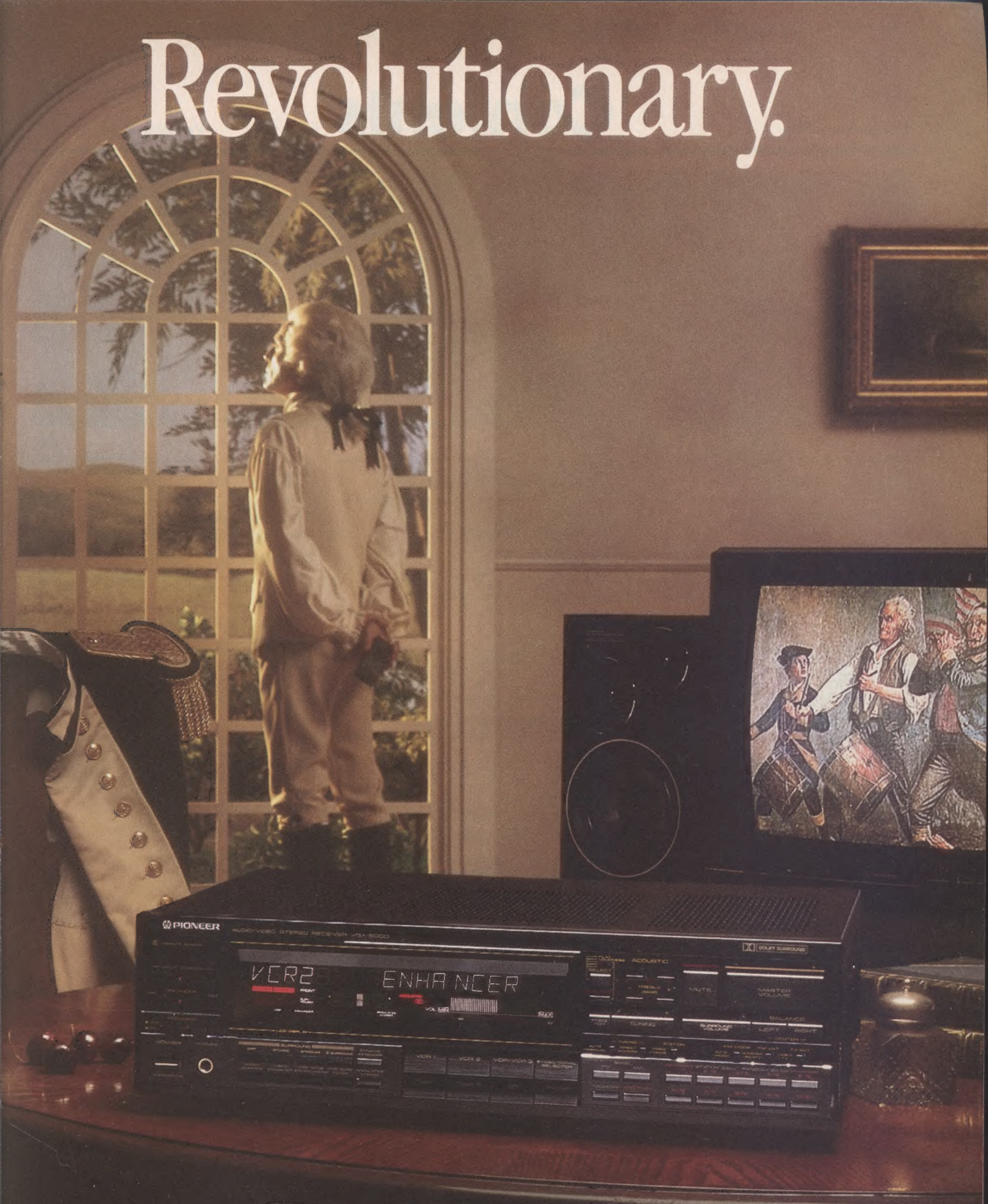
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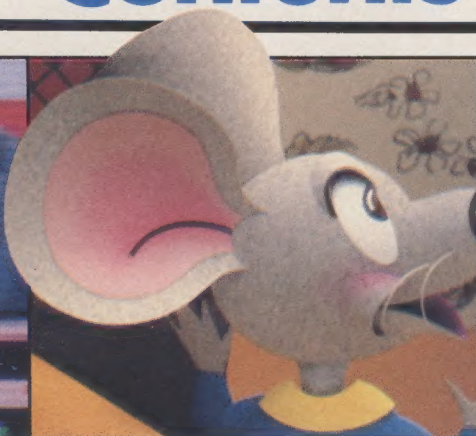


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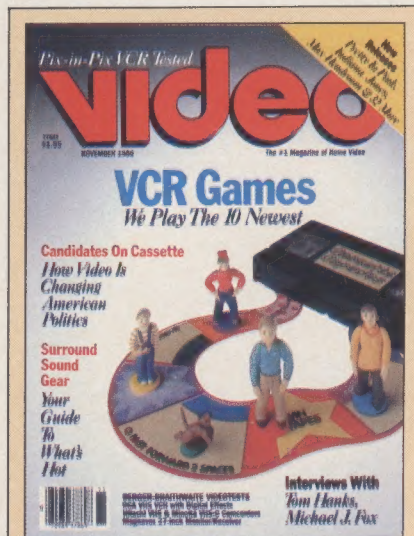
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About the Cover. VCR games may be this year's Cabbage Patch dolls. Game board by Ajin; figures by Anna V. Walker. Photographed by Les Morsillo.

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Channel One

The Price Is (Almost) Right

The dateline is Las Vegas, where some 10,000 video folks, mostly prerecorded tape retailers, convened in summer's waning days for their annual show. In this volatile, unpredictable, frenetic world of cassettes, there are usually as many opinions about a given topic as there are people. However, when it came to cassette prices, there was one thing everyone agreed on: the cost of a movie on tape was becoming inversely proportional to the climbing three-figure mercury readings in this overheated dune town.

It's no secret that cassette purveyors are in business to make money. Nor that the more tapes they sell, the more money they earn, and that the key to high volume is price. What are we getting at? Simple. The days of \$79.95 tapes are pretty much over, even for hot titles that Hollywood expects to be heavily rented and lightly bought. There are sure to be exceptions, like the high-priced clunker *Santa Claus the Movie*, which does, still, cost 80 bucks. For the most part, though, the \$80 movie is now \$60 or \$70. That's not low enough to give most of us a real incentive to buy, but it is a bit of a break for those committed to building personal libraries.

The real price story is in the lower reaches. Tape companies want you to buy rather than rent their films, and are beginning to have some success at pricing them to make sales happen. Last year, the Video Software Dealers Association reported that the rental-to-sale ratio for prerecorded tapes was 80 to 20 percent. This year, the figure was 75 to 25 percent. Some observers expect the trend to continue, and it probably will, especially when tapes like *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* and Walt Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* are being sold at \$29.95.

Like it or not, home video has always been a slave to seasonal business. Many of these price reductions are temporary. Traditionally, Disney's tapes turn into pumpkins after Christmas. While it's not quite the same as the way OPEC controls supplies to create demand, the principles are similar. If you're ever going to buy, it's during December. We're wondering just when some bold, audacious company is going to get hold of a megahit, lower the price, and leave it there.

Believe us, home video people go through a lot of angst to determine how much to charge for a piece of creative work. When we bumped into Stuart Karl on the convention floor, we asked the guy who brought us *Jane Fonda's Workouts* if he ever argues with his conscience or his staff over the price of his products. "Are you kidding?" he said. "Every time we price a product there's a fight. In fact, that's all we ever fight about," he laughed. *Max Headroom, the Original Story*, for example, was originally set to sell at \$39.95; we even noted trade magazine ads at that price. Karl, perhaps after seeing Max's cult popularity soar, quickly dropped it to \$29.95.

And that's not all. The glut of how-to tapes will continue to give new meaning to low, low prices, you'll still be able to buy a Playboy centerfold video for a sawbuck, and there will be more and more entrepreneurs selling titles like *How to Beat a Speeding Ticket* for \$14.95. How much is a tape worth? How badly do you want it for your library?

We see scores of new releases each month, and frankly, you couldn't pay us enough to watch some without our finger poised on the fast forward button. But neither is there time to replay the best. How many times can you watch a movie? If it's a work of art, it's a keeper, and you can watch it again and again, just like re-reading a great book. When we think about owning a tape, we worry less about how much it costs and more about how good it is. When Hollywood begins to think like that, we'll start to see many more lower-priced films on tape, and a lot more keepers. Otherwise, despite the holiday hoopla, the slightly lower prices for hits, and the occasional bargains, it will still stay a renter's business.

—The Editors

video

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National Editorial & Sales	460 West 34 Street N.Y., N.Y. 10001 (212) 947-6500
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Fast Forward

Late-Breaking News

The Shape Of PIPs To Come

RCA's new VCR with digital video effects, reviewed in this month's "Videotests," promises to be the first of many. Toshiba, JVC, Hitachi, and Sharp have also announced digital-effect models, and industry watchers say that by early next year we'll be hearing about VCRs with the picture-in-picture effect and a wide variety of other digital features from virtually every major VCR maker.

Dial M For Macrovision

...And say goodbye to dubbing films off cable and pay-per-view networks. Video copyguard specialists are trying to sell non-broadcast TV programmers on the virtues of their system. If they win their support, which is by no means certain, subscribers will find themselves unable even to timeshift the services' films. However, because of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1984 ruling upholding the legality of off-air home taping, Macrovision is staying away from broadcast TV. (See this month's "TV Den" for a look at how Macrovision works.)

Faster Than A Speeding Bullet

Look for a sophisticated new shutter to debut here next year on one or more camcorders. The electronic shutter, rated at 1/1000 second, reportedly can turn a speeding blur, like a rifled TD pass, into a clearly moving object in stop or slow motion. Matsushita is already using it on a camcorder sold in Japan.

Titanic Tube Scoop

It's home video's version of a scoop: vidfans will be able to watch explorer Robert D. Ballard's dramatic deep-sea videos of the wreck of the R.M.S. Titanic before national television audiences. Vestron Video is including extensive footage, only snippets of which have been aired, from the historic expedition in a one-hour National Geographic documentary, tentatively called *The Titanic*. Directed by Irwin Rosten, the tape will cover the superliner's history, showing archival footage of its fateful voyage as well as the haunting new views of its watery grave. VCR owners can look for the tape next month. Everyone else will have to wait until it resurfaces sometime next year, probably on PBS (or turn to this month's "Gazette" for a peek at the expedition's vidgear).

Nikon Takes The Plunge

Nikon, famed for its still cameras, is joining the video age with its first camcorder, the 8 mm Action-8. The new mini video entry weighs just 2.9 pounds (minus battery and cassette) and comes packed with an autofocus zoom lens, a solid state CCD image sensor, high light sensitivity, four video heads, automatic white balance, fade buttons, and back-light compensation. It will sell for \$1850 and appears to share the body Matsushita provided for Olympus' new 8mm camcorder. The Action-8 adds Nikon to the list of firms—including Canon, Minolta, and Pentax—that make both video and

still cameras, strengthening a trend that can only benefit both types of photography.

Dear Dad, 'Sign Here'

The day may be coming when teenagers will have to hand video stores consent forms, along with their two bucks and club membership cards, before departing with a tape. A handful of New Jersey rental stores, including All Star Video in Freehold and Video Palace in Barnegat, now require minors who want R-rated films to file signed parental consent forms. Video Palace's arrangement even lets mom and dad track their kids' viewing choices, though owner Art Monticello concedes that kids are resourceful enough to beat the system for films they really want.

Fit To Be Taped

Blank tape buyers should check out the Maxell Tape Corporation's new *Video Tape Handbook*. The free 48-page guide offers an unusually clear description of how videotape captures images. For a copy, write to Maxell Corp. of America, Video Products Division, 60 Oxford Drive, Moonachie, N.J. 07074.

Trading Format Places

Two recent moves by Warner Home Video illustrate the gravity of Beta's decline. In a sharp break from tradition, the company decided to issue new groups of Jacques Cousteau and Spanish-language tapes in VHS only, with no Beta

equivalents. At the same time, Warner plunged into its first 8mm releases with a series of ten tapes due out before the end of the year, including *Pale Rider*, *Zelig*, *Arthur*, *Police Academy*, and *Risky Business*. Warner, by the way, is not alone. A number of smaller companies also no longer release all their tapes in VHS and Beta.

Pac-TV

Credit gadfly Senator William Proxmire with the year's brightest idea for a public service message. Why not, he suggested during hearings over allowing Senate proceedings to be broadcast, use the TV screen to list special interest contributions during the lulls when votes are counted? It "would make television in the Senate serve a real purpose," argued (to no avail) the man who created the Golden Fleece Awards.

Plastic Canonade

Cash-shy Canon shoppers can now buy vid gear on time with the company's new consumer credit card. The black and silver cards (black and gold for businesses) carry no fees and give shoppers 30 days to pay their bills without incurring finance charges, and 20 months with. Applications are available from Canon dealers.

Coneheads Forever

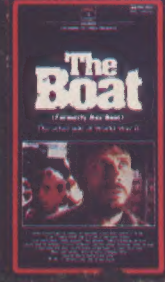
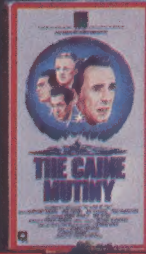
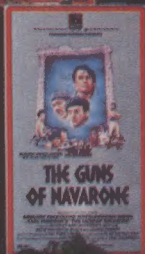
SNL-ophiles can look forward to a sequel to last Christmas' monster video hit, *The Best of John Belushi*: a one-hour *Best of Dan Aykroyd* with Beldar, Nixon, Carter, and other wild and crazy guys.

HOLLYWOOD

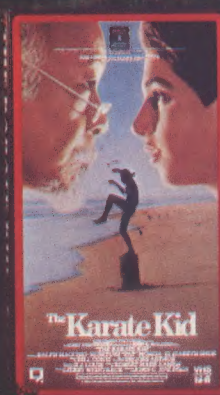
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Feedback

Readers Air Their Views

Et Tu, HQ?

Bravo for your enlightening article "HQ Confidential" (September 1986). Although it took me five years to purchase my first Beta machine, I have come to appreciate its superiority over VHS. Your article explaining HQ's limitations and inconsistencies brought out one fundamental fact: it can't compete technically with SuperBeta. This comes from a video fanatic previously sold on the former product. Please continue your comparisons because such evaluations will clear up the waters muddied by the VHS industry.

Ricardo Salas
Oxnard, Calif.

Once and for all, the confusion over VHS with HQ circuitry ought to show us that VHS manufacturers do not care about the consumer. Unfortunately Mr. and Mrs. America are too uninformed to realize they are being shafted by the likes of JVC. Readers of your excellent publication are being made aware of the technical differences between HQ machines, but we're a small number compared to the vast number of VCR owners.

Robert Johnson
Niles, Ill.

Dish Enchantment

Unless you have an interest in some cable company, I cannot understand the anti-dish bias expressed in "Dish Buff Doomsday" ("Fast Forward," September 1986). Dish sales are again growing, and new stations are starting on a regular basis. As for scrambling, its days are numbered. Who will invest in expensive descrambling equipment once cheap black boxes are available? For now, one can buy a \$375 M/A-Com VideoCipher II and pay a monthly fee, or one can buy an altered Canadian Oak-Orion unit for \$500 and pay no monthly fees. This is illegal, but so is copying rental tapes, and who worries about that?

Are we "dishies" worried, as you claim? Nope! Even if all programmers thinking about scrambling do so, a dish still offers more variety and better quality than any other medium.

Peteris Dobulis
Mesick, Mich.

According to an article I came across in *Electronic Engineering Times*, Radio Shack assesses the consumer value of the VideoCipher II at around \$200. Dealers and distributors state that the box wholesales for around \$350. My recommendation to anyone thinking of purchasing the M/A-Com box is to wait a few months. With Senate hearings going on and several companies suing M/A-Com for various reasons, the price of getting unscrambled should be coming down.

David J. Falkenberg
Hopkinton, Mass.

Macro Miseries

So far I've had no problem dubbing any encoded tapes, although the resulting copies suffered from jittering, smearing, bending, loss of detail, excessive grain, and other aberrations. The reason for these poor copies was obvious—the originals had the same problems, quite noticeable during playback.

Now I'm not crazy about paying 80 bucks for a \$4 tape and a high-speed dub, even if a lot of it goes to royalties. However, for quality copies and premium packaging I'll pay the price. What we're talking about here are inferior tapes being sold at premium prices. I won't buy any more CBS or MCA tapes since I understand all further releases will be encoded with Macrovision. And if this becomes a recording standard, I'll never buy another tape.

David Myers
Muncy, Penn.

As a video store owner, I hate Macrovision. Time after time I have people bringing tapes back claiming they don't work on certain machines. I don't know why sometimes these tapes play and sometimes they don't, but half the time we have to give credit for the movie.

By the way, someone knows the secret for getting through Macrovision, because one of my *Back to the Future* tapes has been swapped with a copy. So the process wasn't impenetrable, anyway. Come on studios, give us small businesses a break.

Victoria L. Kraus
Atlantic City, N.J.

In a recent TV interview comedian Robert Klein compared tape dubbing for personal use to removing the tag from a mattress. I can't accept the studios' view that an effective copyguard is going to increase sales of tapes by any real margin. So far, this attitude has only created ill will and, in cases like mine, a decision not to do any business at all with their product. MCA will no doubt counter that its release of *Back to the Future* is, nevertheless, topping the list of cassette sales at the price the company wants. Yet how many more copies would be sold if the price were, say, cut in half? And how irate must how many buyers be with their screwed-up picture and a receipt for \$80? Are the immediate profits worth it in the long run?

Larry Lewis
North Brookfield, Mass.

Scrambled X

"Ed Meese, Peeping Tom" ("Channel One," August 1986) was something that needed to be said. But these kind of people don't want to learn the truth. All they want is a scapegoat. In the early 1950s, they rode the coattails of a Dr. F. Wertham, who proved—to them—that comic books were causing all the problems of the kids in America. In 1953 the comics code was issued and, in that same year, *Playboy* was born. But parents didn't care. They had a scapegoat and were enjoying the fire. Why bother to find out the real problems? Just think, next time they may enjoy burning video magazines.

Frank Simonetti
San Francisco, Calif.

You claim "it has long been axiomatic that it is unwise as well as impossible to legislate morality." That statement is beyond hyperbole. Surely you understand that morality is precisely what legislation is for. The most appropriate definition of morality in Webster's Dictionary is "the quality of that which conforms to right ideals or principles of human conduct." Every orderly, caring, and thoughtful society must determine through legislation what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior by its members. You and I may disagree what those principles and limits



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Feedback

are, but please don't overstate a very real problem.
James E. Long, Jr.
Pittsburgh, Penn.

Moral absolutes have been a cornerstone of civilization since the Ten Commandments. Pornographers hide behind the veil of "freedom of speech," stating that it is every individual's right to say what he or she wants regardless of its nature. But if one person talks to another about committing a crime, it's not free speech, but conspiracy. The fathers of this country did not have such absurd liberties in mind when they drafted and adopted the Bill of Rights. Our society has a right to be protected from the moral decay that pornography reaps.

David A. Zych
Poolesville, Md.

Who's Your PAL?

I live in Argentina, and decided to write to you in reference to "If It's Tuesday, It Must Be SECAM" (July 1986), which discussed the difficulties of playing tapes recorded in different systems. Since 1978, when PAL N was adopted in our country, I've been adapting VCRs and TVs from NTSC, PAL B, and other systems to PAL N. Most of the VCRs in my country were bought in the USA and have to be adapted. The cost of a com-

plete adaptation is about \$100 (U.S.). I know our job is unique, because only Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay have PAL N, but surely not many people imagine that we have such a specialized activity in this southern country.

Edmundo C. Battaglini
Video Battaglini S.R.L.
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Peaceful Coexistence

After studying your "VCR Buyer's Guide" (July 1986), I solved my Beta-VHS dilemma by buying a high-end Beta VCR and a low-end VHS VCR for rental movies. The \$169 price of the VCR seemed offset by the prospect of saving on head wear on the high-end VCR from rental tapes, the ability to dub, and a lower discount price on the Beta than on equivalent VHS machines. The only limitation is that the VCR is, like most VHS movies, mono only. Why has no one offered a VHS player with stereo, specifically as an accessory to Beta VCRs?

L.E. Birdzell Jr.
Newport, R.I.

Holmes' Last Case

I read with interest Vincent Basilicato's letter ("Feedback," June 1986) regarding rental tapes that have been duped, and at the wrong speed. While that may have been inexcusable, how would you

like to purchase a tape that has been duped at the wrong speed by the manufacturer? I recently purchased two *Sherlock Holmes* tapes from Congress that were recorded at EP, even though the box clearly read "High Quality SP Mode."

Assuming this could have been a fluke, I returned the tape for another, but demanded the box be opened before I took it home. After opening three tapes and finding the same thing, I was refunded my money. Many an unsuspecting buyer might not even have noticed, but that's no excuse for companies to try and fool the public.

Don Corey
Peoria, Ill.

The Timer Machine

In "The VCR Stereo Primer" (September 1986) Roderick Woodcock states "there are no TVs with timers." Not true. I have a Sony 2782R monitor that has a built-in 24-hour program timer. If the VCR and TV timers are synchronized, both go on at the same time. The monitor also has a built-in MTS decoder, and the stereo signal can be tapped via the monitor output jacks. The TV will go off within two hours after the preset time if no buttons are pressed.

Ira Pollack
Massapequa Park, N.Y.

SHE WON AN OSCAR.®



Geraldine Page in THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL

Geraldine Page takes a sentimental journey, "The Trip to Bountiful," and walks away with an Academy Award™ for Best Actress of 1985.

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Vincent Canby, The New York Times

"A seamless mixture of tears and laughter."
Michael Wilmington, Los Angeles Times

"So life-enriching it takes your breath away..."
Rex Reed, Syndicated Columnist

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AND REBECCA DE MORNAY AS THELMA DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY FRED MURPHY MUSIC BY J.A.C. REDFORD

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SAM GROGG AND GEORGE YANOFF PRODUCED BY STERLING VANWAGENEN AND HORTON FOOTE

SCREENPLAY BY HORTON FOOTE BASED ON HIS PLAY "THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL" DIRECTED BY PETER MASTERSON

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The Battle Rages

Kenneth Pangborn ("Feedback," July 1986) starts off comparing VHS to 8mm and ends up comparing VHS to professional Beta. Why? Because 8mm on its merits simply does not stand up to VHS! The real answer has to be a back-to-back comparison of the two systems as they are now, without considering future improvements, which are iffy and which always appear on both sides. So I put it to you, VIDEO Magazine. Please take a Sony CCD-M8U and a JVC VHS Mini VideoMovie and put them through the wringer in the same issue and the same article, and print both sets of findings back-to-back on the same page.

Doug Polk
San Francisco, Calif.

Ka-Boom

In reading Harvey Elliott's "Apocalypse Eventually" (June 1986) I noticed that a movie I consider the best of the genre was left out. That was the movie *Threads*. It was a British production and, like *The Day After*, looked into the lives of two families. However, it was much more believable and horrible in the frightening details of a nuclear war. The scenes showing the destruction were far superior, and *Threads* also took you beyond the first few days into the next few years and through the nuclear winter. I

recommend this movie for everyone. It won't be forgotten.
Kenneth Hall
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Threads has just been released on tape by WorldVideo Pictures (see "Directory").

Rising From the Grave?

Recent sales figures showing Beta edging out VHS sales in California may give the folks at JVC a few nightmares. Why has this happened in California of all places? People have gotten the word that they can copy their favorite flicks on Beta and that Macrovision makes VHS units useless. So many people are adding Beta VCRs to their homes. Plans to place encrypted signals in broadcast signals will further deteriorate the value of VHS. And the biggest sales push for Beta has been in Hollywood, where insiders know the score. Kenneth Pangborn
Clearwater, Fla.

Slings and Arrows

M. George Stevenson ("Et Tu, Shakespeare?," August 1986) laments that Laurence Olivier's films of *Hamlet* and *Henry V* are "only on CED disks." A year ago I obtained top-quality, flawless VHS tapes of both films, released by the Rank Organisation and sold in the U.S. by CBS Video for \$69.95 each, in matching

library-shelf cassette containers. Et tu, Stevenson?
John P. Lincoln
Bellevue, Neb.

Under the Wire

Thanks for the excellent article on wireless headphones for home viewing ("Audio Input," September 1986). Could you please provide an address for the company that makes the Wire-Free model?

James P. Kelly
Elizabeth, N.J.

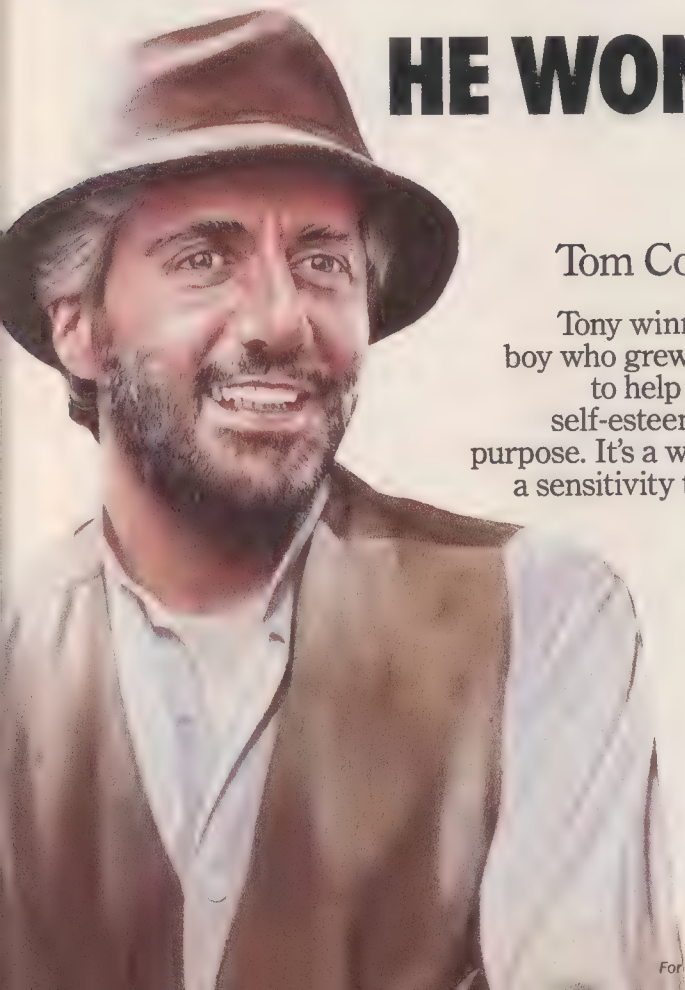
The Wire-Free is sold by Berkey, 75 Hollywood Hill Lane, P.O. Box 4560, Greenwich, Conn. 06830 (203-622-5000).

The Last Word

I laughed my head off for hours. First at the great article by Paul Slansky on taping Reagan's memorable moments ("The President Reagan Show," June 1986). Second at all the letter writers who wrote in to say that Reagan would be remembered as a great President. Keep up the good work.

Scott Duncan
Andrews, N.C.

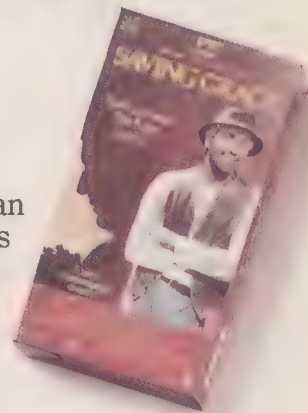
VIDEO welcomes your comments and questions. Please do not enclose self-addressed envelopes with letters as the volume of mail does not permit personal replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to **Feedback, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.**



HE WON AN ELECTION.

Tom Conti in SAVING GRACE

Tony winner Tom Conti stars as the orphan boy who grew up to be elected Pope, and quits to help a small Italian village regain its self-esteem, while he regains his sense of purpose. It's a warm and funny story told with a sensitivity that will charm and delight you.



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The Gazette

EDITED BY IRA ROBBINS

Future's Fox's Future Feature

Even in late May, it's freezing in Cleveland. The cast and crew of Paul Schrader's *Light of Day*, spilling out of the tiny smoke-filled bar in which the final week's shooting is taking place, grasp cups of coffee and huddle under an awning to avoid the needles of cold drizzle.

The film stars Michael J. Fox and rocker Joan Jett as siblings in a troubled family; Gena Rowlands and Jason Miller play their parents. The title was originally *Born in the U.S.A.*; Bruce Springsteen appropriated the line and in return penned "Just Around the Corner to the Light of Day," providing the name under which the film will be released in February.

Fox's character works in a factory during the day and plays guitar with his sister in a bar band at night; he also acts as a surrogate father to

her illegitimate child. It's a rock'n'roll movie inasmuch as music is part of their lives, not to mention crucial to the film's appeal. The Springsteen song, some Jett originals, and Fox's playing and singing debut (he was dubbed in *Back to the Future*) will undoubtedly be remembered, though it's really a family drama.

And a rather intense one at that, dealing with loss and death on both literal and metaphorical levels. Quite a departure for the amiable Fox, best known as the caustic-but-lovably-callow Alex P. Keaton on TV's *Family Ties* and the confused-but-lovably-human Marty McFly in *Back to the Future*.

"People say to me, 'By doing this movie, are you trying to make a statement?'" Fox remarks, waiting in his trailer between takes. "I'm not,



really. It's just a script I liked and a story that I wanted to do. Then I sat back and said, 'Jeez, I guess it is kind of a risky thing,' but it puzzled me. It's more of a risk *not* to do it. It's a risk to restrict yourself and say, 'Well, here's my image.'

"Sitcom, in a way, is a fantasy. *Back to the Future* was a fantasy. The other movie was a fantasy," he laughs,

referring to *Teen Wolf*. ("We call it the *other* movie at my house.") "I just wanted to do something real, where if you blow your nose you blew your nose. A movie where people went to the bathroom."

Fox observes that the challenge of drama is different than that of comedy, but no easier or harder. He's looking forward to his next film—director Herb Ross' comedy, *The Secret of My Success*—in which Fox is playing what he terms a "catalytic character."

"*Back to the Future* was a character comedy, but Marty wasn't really catalytic; he was a very reactive character. Alex is a catalyst: he goes in and creates funny situations. I wanted to do a character like that in a film."

—Karen Schlosberg

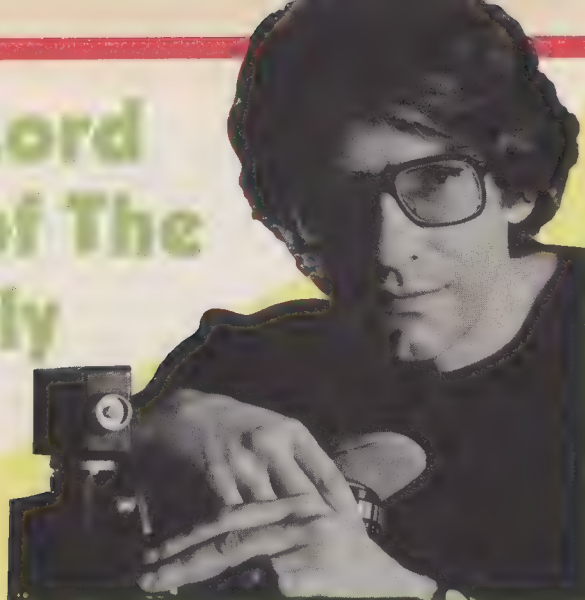


SPEAKERS CORNER



Woody Allen on colorization: "...an ugly practice, totally venal, anti-artistic, and against the integrity of every filmmaker. Without the director's consent it seems to me a criminal mutilation of his work."

Lord of The Fly



"The original *Fly* was about the most polite horror film ever made," declares director David Cronenberg, whose reinterpretation of the 1958 classic is anything but tame. "Even for the '50s it was an extremely naive and ponderous film." Unlike the original, with its implicit warning that those who tamper with science will be destroyed, here technology is simply one of the extensions of man that media guru Marshall McLuhan theorized about, and which Cronenberg judges totally valid.

"I'm interested in the *idea* of technology more than the hardware. It's a way we try to gain control of our environment, and that reflects back and changes us. That whole pro-

cess fascinates me." Despite *The Fly*'s graphic special effects for star Jeff Goldblum's transformation, Cronenberg's insistence that the film remain first and foremost a relationship story invites comparison with his overtly McLuhanist work, *Videodrome*. That 1983 film intimately explored the interaction between man and videotape machine, and did a lot to blur the line between life and Memorex.

Says Cronenberg, "I wasn't raised on TV at all; I was a reader. And yet, I'm very conscious of how my films will play on TV. It wasn't that obvious when I did *Shivers* and *Rabid* because tape didn't exist except as a promotional format. But I knew the films would be on television. I'm conscious of the way films that are composed for widescreen only are truncated on television. You leave it to some anonymous source to scan the frame for your video version—it drives me crazy!"

While foreseeing the consequences of people viewing his films on video as a kind of isolationism, this vigorous anti-censorship advocate relishes the medium's freedom. "It has made control freaks all over the world very nervous. It's the freedom of expression and the freedom to trade images clandestinely. I like the fact that *Videodrome* has done a lot better on tape than it ever did in the theaters. There's an aspect of small groups or even individuals viewing films—being able to stop it, rewind it, look only at their favorite parts, skip over the parts they find boring—that's much more like the way people read novels, and it makes it an entirely different experience."

One of *The Fly*'s scenes destined for frequent replay features the director making a brief screen debut as a gynecologist, a role once jokingly suggested by Martin Scorsese.

"Giving birth to a monster—I've done that before," jokes the genial revolutionary of horror.

—Toby Goldstein

THE ENTERPRISE'S FIRST FRONTIER

It was billed as the first-time-ever public screening of *Star Trek*'s original pilot; although it wasn't (*Star Trek* conventions have shown it for a decade), Trekkies, TV buffs, and reporters gathered at New York's Museum of Broadcasting in August to watch the show and hear *Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry expound on the whys and wherefores of the pilot and the series.

The Cage was commissioned by NBC and filmed in 1964 after Roddenberry, a successful TV writer and producer, had sold the network on the idea of an action-adventure series set in space. Jeffrey Hunter, whom Roddenberry had seen in *King as Jesus Christ*, was cast as the somber Capt. Pike, while Leonard Nimoy played Mr. Spock, the alien with the pointed ears. The network was disappoint-

ed by the show, calling it "too cerebral," but impressed enough with the special effects and concept to ask for a second pilot. This one starred William Shatner as Capt. Kirk and was more action oriented. ("We even had a fist fight in the end," noted Roddenberry.) *Star Trek* was born.

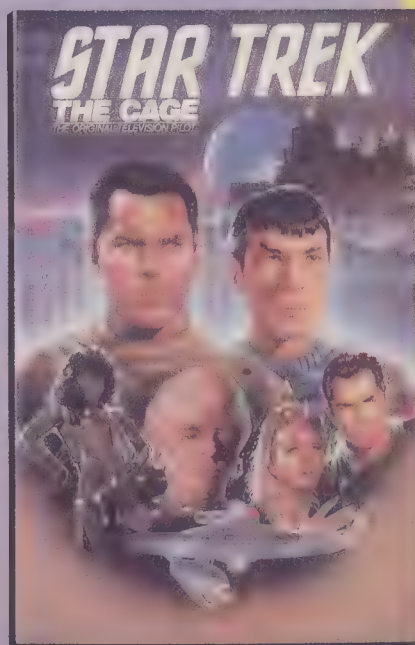
The Cage, however, had cost NBC a lot of money. When pressed by budgets and deadlines during the run of the series, Roddenberry incorporated the bulk of the footage into a two-part episode, *The Menagerie*. Rather than make a duplicate print of *The Cage*, though, cost-conscious technicians chopped up the *only* copy, snipping out the scenes they needed.

When Paramount went to release the first pilot on videocassette earlier this year, it discovered the only complete copy was a black & white version owned by Roddenberry. Undaunted, the company mixed color footage used in *The Menagerie* with the missing monochrome scenes to create the composite they are issuing. (Roddenberry refused to colorize the B&W material, saying that colorization "looks fake.")

The Cage is a fascinating experience for fans, adding texture to familiar scenes from *The Menagerie*. Although only about 10 minutes has been added back, the restored bits include the opening credits, a

silly travelling-through-space sequence, and a line that apparently upset NBC censors. When Pike remarks on guest star Susan Oliver's outfit, she replies, "Well, I have to wear something (pause, suggestively) don't I?"

—Tom Soter



'39 "Ninotchka," '44 "Double Indemnity," '45 "The Lost Weekend," '48 "A Foreign Affair," '50 "Sunset Boulevard," '53 "Stalag 17," '58 "Witness For The Prosecution," '59 "Some Like It Hot," '60 "The Apartment," '66 "The Fortune Cookie," '72 "Avanti!," '81 "Buddy Buddy." Billy Wilder, the quintessential writer-director. A man whose unrelenting passion makes him an astute observer as to what has changed. And what has not.

"I wrote about 50 pictures before I started directing. My initial intention when I came from Germany was to write. But then it is more fun, more rewarding to become a director. They're better paid and get the pretty girls."

"A whole category of actors has gone down the drain. Claude Rains and George Sanders. You couldn't ask them to play a secondary part today. Today, they would have their own series."

"I am what I am. I'm just too old, have lived through too much, have worked too hard to be a Pollyanna. That doesn't mean I've lost my enthusiasm."

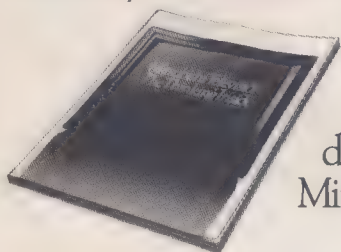
"The language that has been established between the picture maker and the onlooker has been tremendously refined. Today they outthink you, outguess you all the time. You had better not underestimate them."

"Let people reach for it. Let them add it up. Don't spell it out. They're not stupid."

Filmmakers like Billy Wilder challenge the manufacturer to develop componentry able to capture their art in all its subtlety and nuance. Mitsubishi answers that challenge with

products like the 50-inch rear projection set shown here.

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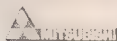


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Video Kix

Twenty years ago, the bossiest premium a kid could get from cereal boxes was a cardboard record that played (well, sort of) if you taped a quarter on for ballast. A few steps along the evolutionary marketing media ladder, General Mills is revving up a deal that will offer a 30 minute soccer instruction videocassette in exchange for two Kix boxtops and a sawbuck. Look for specially-marked packages on your grocery shelves next spring.

—Ira Robbins



DANIEL ABRAHAM

The Longest Weekend

If you haven't got anything lined up for the weekend (and that includes sleeping), we can recommend 10 theatrical films that will keep you glued to the tube from Friday evening until dawn breaks on Monday morning. All-told, these endurance testers run over 57 hours!

1. Berlin Alexanderplatz (MGM/UA): 15 1/3 hours
2. Shoah (Paramount): 9 1/2 hours
3. The Godfather 1902-1959: The Complete Epic (Paramount): 6 hours
4. Cleopatra (CBS/Fox): 246 minutes
5. Napoleon (MCA): 235 minutes
6. Gone with the Wind (MGM/UA): 231 minutes
7. Once Upon a Time in America (Warner): 225 minutes
8. Heaven's Gate (MGM/UA): 220 minutes
9. The Ten Commandments (Paramount): 219 minutes
10. Ben Hur (MGM/UA): 217 minutes

Top 40

KID VIDEO

1. *Alice in Wonderland* (1). 1951. 75m. \$29.95. Disney.
2. *Pinocchio* (2). 1940. 87m. \$29.95. Disney.
3. *Dumbo* (6). 1941. 64m. \$29.95. Disney.
4. *Pound Puppies* (4). 1985. 37m. \$14.95. Family.
5. *Winnie the Pooh and Tigger Too* (3). 1974. 25m. \$14.95. Disney.
6. *Robin Hood* (—). 1973. 83m. \$29.95. Disney.
7. *Mickey Knows Best* (7). 1986. 26m. \$14.95. Disney.
8. *Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day* (8). 1968. 24m. \$14.95. Disney.
9. *Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree* (5). 1965. 25m. \$14.95. Disney.
10. *The Importance of Being Donald* (10). 1986. 25m. \$14.95. Disney.

CASSETTE RENTALS

1. *Jewel of the Nile* (2). 1985. 106m. (PG-13) \$79.98. CBS/Fox.
2. *Back to the Future* (1). 1985. 116m. (PG) \$79.95. MCA.
3. *Spies Like Us* (9). 1985. 103m. (PG) \$79.95. Warner.
4. *Murphy's Romance* (—). 1985. 107m. (PG-13) \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.
5. *White Nights* (3). 1985. 136m. (PG-13) \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.
6. *Jagged Edge* (4). 1985. 108m. (R) \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.
7. *Delta Force* (—). 1986. 125m. (R) \$79.95. Media.
8. *A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge* (5). 1985. 87m. (R) \$79.95. Media.
9. *Enemy Mine* (—). 1985. 109m. (PG-13) \$79.98. CBS/Fox.
10. *Cocoon* (6). 1985. 117m. (PG-13) \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

CASSETTE SALES

1. *Jane Fonda's New Workout* (1). 1985. 90m. \$39.95. Karl.
2. *The Sound of Music* (3). 1965. 174m. (G) \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
3. *Alien* (—). 1979. 116m. (R) \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
4. *Back to the Future* (2). 1985. 116m. (PG) \$79.95. MCA.
5. *Casablanca* (5). 1942. 102m. \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
6. *Alice in Wonderland* (7). 1951. 65m. (G) \$29.95. Disney.
7. *Pinocchio* (—). 1940. 87m. \$29.95. Disney.
8. *Kathy Smith's Body Basics* (—). 1985. 60m. \$29.95. JCI.
9. *White Nights* (4). 1985. 136m. (PG-13) \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.
10. *Jane Fonda's Workout* (8). 1982. 90m. \$59.95. Karl.

VIDEODISC SALES

1. *Back to the Future* (1). 1985. 116m. (PG) LV \$34.98. MCA.
2. *White Nights* (—). 1985. 136m. (PG-13) LV, CED \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.
3. *Cocoon* (2). 1985. 117m. (PG-13) LV \$34.98. CED \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
4. *Delta Force* (—). 1986. 125m. (R) LV \$34.95. Image.
5. *Jagged Edge* (3). 1985. 108m. (R) LV, CED \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.
6. *Witness* (4). 1985. 113m. (R) LV, CED \$29.95. Paramount.
7. *To Live and Die in L.A.* (5). 1985. 116m. LV \$34.95. Vestron.
8. *A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge* (—). 1985. 87m. (R) LV \$34.95. Image.
9. *Spies Like Us* (—). 1985. 103m. (PG) \$79.95. Warner.
10. *Murphy's Romance* (—). 1985. 107m. (PG-13) LV, CED \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

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So go to your nearest video retailer and get the new *Energize Yourself* video from MCA. You'll definitely get a charge out of this one.

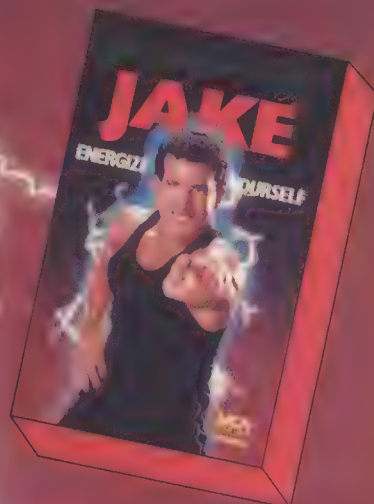
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9-1/2 Weeks Plus 4 Minutes

It's been said that *9-1/2 Weeks*—a movie of thinly veiled pornography about the games a couple plays in the name of sexual obsession—would make the ultimate home video. After all, who wouldn't rather watch this saga of libidos on fire in the privacy of one's own living room than in a crowd of steamy strangers? Dirty old men can hang up their raincoats and rejoice—MGM/UA is releasing the film on home video this month.

It'll even have a provocative scene the domestic version didn't. "It's the one that enraged people in previews," says the film's director, Adrian Lyne (an Englishman who also did *Foxes* and *Flashdance*). "People walked out yelling and screaming, but it was a pivotal scene, the only real S&M scene in the movie. It's in his [Mickey Rourke's] apartment and they're

playing another game, if you like. He asks her [Kim Basinger] to crawl on her hands and knees and be a hooker, but she doesn't want to. It's the start of her unease with the relationship—the beginning of the last act. Without the scene you couldn't understand why she left him."

Most filmgoers couldn't understand why she'd hang out with this sadistic geek at all, but you have to chalk it up to a sense of reckless adventure if you're going to enjoy *9-1/2 Weeks* on any level. Lyne, who started out as a TV commercial director and as recently as '83 directed spots for Calvin Klein and Pepsi, says other scenes were butchered in the American release, like the one in which the lovebirds have sex in a wet alley. It was originally two minutes longer and "lyrical, not squalid" according to Lyne. But the footage wasn't added to the video version because everyone concerned wanted an R rating. "The video couldn't be sold in certain states if it had more than an R rating," says Lyne.

"It's awful, pathetic," he says of the fuss made about the film by the media. "I felt the violence of the critics' reaction against the movie was as if they were threatened sexually by it. But they're quite happy to see endless destruction and maiming and killing. That doesn't hurt people?"

Does Lyne see the appeal of *9-1/2 Weeks* as a home video? "Yes. People are much more comfortable with this in private," he says, then pauses thoughtfully. "I suppose it's understandable."

—Michael Musto

Sony's Titanicom

The entire world was enthralled in August by the pictures of the R.M.S. Titanic. Sunk by an iceberg in 1912, the wreck was discovered last year by a joint French-American expedition. The underwater pictures were made by the team from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. All of the video was collected on Sony equipment but the stunning detail shots were captured by a CCD solid-state image sensor, one that some consumers already have at home. The same sensor is used in Sony 8mm camcorders: the CCD-V8, CCD-V8AF, and Handycam. Amidst an assortment of Sony 3/4-inch, BetaCam, and 8mm equipment, the CCD chip got the highest praise. Expedition leader Dr. Robert D. Ballard said, "Sony's technology was a clear-cut winner from the beginning. It fit our design requirements, has superior resolution, and offers extreme low-light recording capabilities."

—Lancelot Braithwaite



Jagger's Temple of (?) Doom

Some people make a habit of seeing movies the day they open; because of a novel release gambit, they're the only ones who will catch *Running Out of Luck*, a "musical comedy adventure" starring Mick Jagger and directed by Julien (Absolute Beginners) Temple, in cinemas. Everyone else will have to wait a day or two, and watch it on tape at home.

The film will play theatrically in eight cities—for one night only—just prior to its video home release by CBS/Fox on October 2. After that, video stores will be the feature's sole outlet—no cable sale is planned.

—Ira Robbins

New Guinea's Prime Minister Pias Wingti banned the South Pacific nation's first television service only one week before its debut. Not enough regulations, he said, calling for a study of TV's likely impact on New Guineans. Wait until he finds out the answers.

He saw what
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BEDROOM EYES



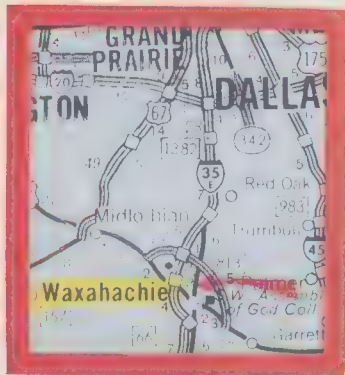
DAYLE HADDON ■ KENNETH GILMAN "BEDROOM EYES" BARBARA LAW ■ CHRISTINE CATTELL
SCREENPLAY BY PRODUCED BY DIRECTED BY
MICHAEL ALAN EDDY ■ ROBERT LANTOS and STEPHEN J. ROTH ■ WILLIAM FRUET

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KEY VIDEO

The Triumph of Tiny Town



Sally Field in the feed store? Robert Mitchum hun-
gered over a chicken-fried
steak at the corner cafe? Rob
Lowe jogging shirtless on the
farm-to-market road? It's just
another day in Waxahachie,
Texas.

The Chamber of Com-
merce in this picturesque
prairie town (pronounced
wox-uh-HATCH-ee) 25 miles
south of Dallas have begun
calling it "Little Hollywood,"
because it's been the location

of 13 major films, starting in 1967 with *Bonnie and Clyde*.
Places in the Heart, *Tender Mercies*, 1918, *Valentine's Day*,
The Trip to Bountiful, and, most recently, *Square Dance* have
all been filmed there. Waxahachie has gained a reputation
among moviemakers as a friendly, cooperative community
where the 18,000 townsfolk welcome the famous without fuss.

Close enough to Dallas for the comfort of big city hotels,
Waxahachie has retained its
turn-of-the-century

architecture and small town
ambience. Some 500 re-
stored homes, many in the
colorful gingerbread style,
line streets shaded by stately
pecans and oaks; a quaint
red-granite courthouse stands
in the middle of a square that
looks like a studio backlot.

L.T. Felty, a former high
school principal and football
coach, has become

Waxahachie's unofficial film commissioner. When Robert Ben-
ton, who wrote the *Bonnie and Clyde* screenplay, returned to
his hometown to direct the autobiographical *Places in the*
Heart, Felty, a 40-year resident, helped with access to local
farmhouses and churches. Word soon got around Hollywood
that Felty was the man to see about filming in the little town.
He's since worked with another Waxahachie native, Horton
Foote, on the three films Foote's made there, and has put to-
gether the *Ellis County Head Book*, featuring photos of local
people and houses eligible for film work. Felty has appeared
onscreen in every movie made in Waxahachie.

The movies have also been a local financial boon. Felty esti-
mates that each big-budget project (including half-a-dozen TV
movies and numerous commercials) generates between \$2.5
and \$11 million worth of business at lumberyards, paint stores,
drygoods shops, hardware dealers, and restaurants. But more
than the dollars, Waxahachie has gained a special pride.

"Our films have won three Oscars," says Felty, referring to
the awards given to Field, Robert Duvall, and Geraldine Page.
"We're real proud of that."

—Elaine Liner



Tee Vee's Zbig Adventure



JOHN GOTTMAN FOR INTERVIEW

Video artist Zbigniew Rybczynski (Zbig to his friends) has never
heard of Ernie Kovacs. You wouldn't guess it, however, from watch-
ing the films he made while living in his native Poland or from his
collection of made-in-the-U.S.A. rock videos, all of which contain a
commercially accessible, slightly subversive surrealism Kovacs
would undoubtedly have appreciated. "Video technology is the ulti-
mate medium for our century," maintains Rybczynski. "It is a
universal form of communication, and also the most sophisticated
technology of our time."

Back in Poland, Rybczynski produced artful, witty, and politically
symbolic films under the economic auspices of the communist
government. He taught at the respected national film school in Lodz.
His short film, *Tango*, won an Academy Award in 1983, and Ry-
bczynski earned international notoriety for managing to get arrested
after stumbling outside the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. ("But I have
Oscar," he reportedly exclaimed as he was led away.) Today, living in
New York, he is quite the advocate of free-market competition and its
technological benefits, and reviles the primitive conditions under
which his films were produced and shown in Poland. "Filmmakers
have freedom in Poland," he explains, "but that doesn't mean your
films will ever get distributed within the country."

Since defecting in 1982, the 37-year-old artist has produced
superior videos for such diverse acts as the Art of Noise, Yoko Ono,
Chuck Mangione, Accept, Jimmy Cliff, Pet Shop Boys, Missing
Persons, Simple Minds, and the Fat Boys. His work usually consists
of formal visual trickery rather than literal illustration of lyrical con-
tent. Rybczynski confesses this is at least partially due to rock's
tendency toward lyric obscurity. "I always ask my crew to tell me
what the song is about," he says. "Ninety-five percent of the time
nobody knows, and that includes the artist."

Thanks to computer technology, Rybczynski now believes a collu-
sion of simultaneous image/music generation is possible. He thus
hopes to move away from rock videos and toward feature produc-
tions integrating sight and sound in new ways. "For the first time in
history, visual artists and musicians have the same tools—the syn-
thesizer and computer. Now that the workshop is the same, there
must be a connection between them."

—Richard Gehr

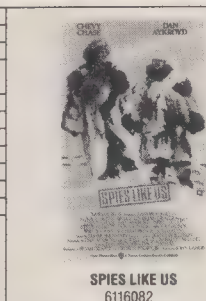
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If you want the Director's Selection, don't do a thing. It will arrive automatically. If you prefer an alternate or none at all, just let us know by returning the enclosed card within two weeks (if you ever receive a movie without having had a full two weeks to decide, just send it back at our expense). You can also call us toll-free with any questions or service requests.

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New Products



JVC's Budget Models Deliver HQ Picture

The best VHS recording circuitry isn't reserved for JVC's top-of-the-line VCRs. The new lower-priced HR-D170 and HR-D180 have HQ recording circuitry for a sharper, cleaner, more detailed picture. A luminance comb filter also boosts the horizontal resolution.

The two models have 110-channel, cable-compatible frequency synthesis tuners. Four programs can be recorded over

JVC HR-D180 VHS HQ VCR

two weeks. Automatic functions include power on when inserting a cassette, play-back, and eject when powering down. The HR-D180 features four video heads and direct channel access on the remote control.

Prices: HR-D170, \$449; HR-D180, \$499.

For additional information,
circle no. 139 on Reader Service Card.



Minolta Introduces New 8mm Camcorder

Minolta is adding a new 8mm camcorder, the CR-8000S AF, to the fledgling format. The MOS pick-up device delivers a horizontal resolution of 350 lines for the camera in light as low as seven lux (manufacturer rated). The 11.5 to 69 mm f/1.2 6x power zoom lens has macro capability, Audio is recorded as an FM signal, and a flying erase head makes for glitch-free edits. The automatic calendar records dates through the year 2098, by which time you'll probably be ready to upgrade. Price: not available.

For additional information,
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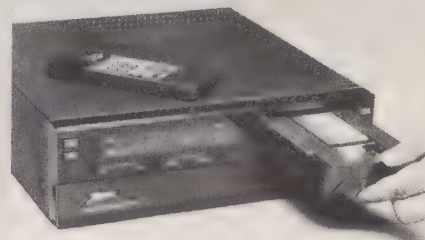
New Hitachi VCRs Made In The U.S.A.

Hitachi's new VHS VCRs have the distinction of being the first decks to be made in the U.S. Coming out of the Japanese company's new Anaheim, Calif. plant, the three VCRs feature HQ (High Quality) recording circuitry for a sharper picture. The VT-1450A and the VT-1720A have MTS decoders with SAP for recording stereo and SAP broadcasts off the air. The 119-channel frequency-synthesized cable-compatible tuners have four-event/two-week timers. The VT-1720A has three video heads and two audio heads for Hi-Fi sound.

Hitachi's top-of-the-line VT-1800A features five video heads and two audio heads. The front-loading deck records eight programs over a year. The 169-channel tuner also receives MTS SAP stereo broadcasts. All of the VCRs

Max Performance From Zenith Midi VCRs

Zenith's new "midi" design reduces the width of its VCRs for better integration with an audio system. The VR2300 and VR3300 Audio/Video Recorders feature VHS Hi-Fi sound and MTS stereo decoding. Music scan searches for blank spaces on an audio-only tape to conveniently fast forward to the next selection. The 178-channel, cable-compatible tuners can be accessed by the infrared Space Command remote controls which also handle onscreen programming of the timer.



Zenith VR3300 VHS HQ VCR

The VR2300 records four programs over two weeks. The HQ circuitry sharpens the picture and enhances the detail. The VR3300's HQ adds video noise reduction to the basic design. Its timer records eight programs over two weeks.

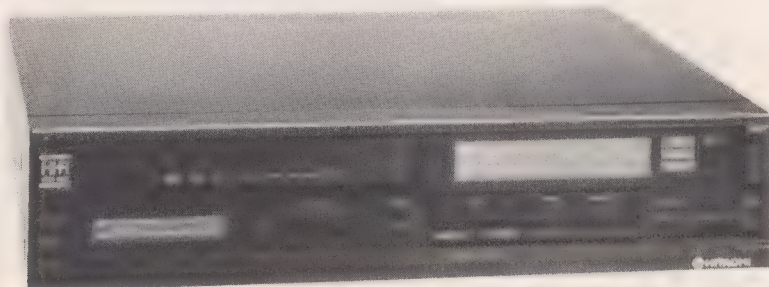
Prices: VR2300, \$899; VR3300, \$999.

For additional information,
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have unified infrared remotes that also control selected Hitachi TVs.

Prices: VT-1450A, \$699; VT1720A, \$799; VT-1800A, \$999.

For additional information,
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Hitachi VT1720A VHS HQ VCR



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Finally, instead of the old-fashioned loudness button, an exclusive dynamic equalization circuit automatically adjusts the level of bass sound to give you natural tonal balance with extraordinary richness and clarity at all volume levels and viewing positions.

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You bring the ears, we'll supply the goosebumps.



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For additional information, circle No. 9 on Reader Service Card.

Model SC2793S CV225 Base Optional. Diag. meas.
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Sharp VC-H65U VHS HQ VCR

For additional information,
circle no. 143 on Reader Service Card.

Sharp Hi-Fi Decks Have HQ, Too

Sharp's two new Hi-Fi VHS VCRs feature High Quality (HQ) recording circuits for crisper pictures and enhanced detail. The VC-H65U and VC-H64U automatically power up and play upon inserting a cassette, and automatically rewind and repeat, too. Both decks have 110-channel cable-compatible tuners with

16 station presets, one-touch recording, and FM stereo/TV simulcast recording.

The VC-H64U records four events over two weeks and has an MPX jack to connect and outboard stereo decoder. The VC-H65U, however, has an MTS decoder. The timer records six events over two weeks. Both VCRs come with infrared remote controls.

Prices: VC-H64U, \$699.95; VC-H65U, \$819.95.

NEC Tailors 8mm For Low Light

NEC's first 8mm camcorder features a CCD chip that records in light as low as seven lux. NEC's chip uses a complementary chroma filter to maintain color purity in poorly lighted scenes. The EM-A8U records audio as an AFM signal and delivers a manufacturer-rated frequency response of 50 to 10,000 Hertz and a signal-to-noise ratio of 60 dB.

A flying erase head ensures crisp edits between scenes without producing a rainbow (or moire) effect. The 6:1 power zoom lens has auto focus and auto white balance.

Price: n.a.

For additional information,
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Pioneer Surround Enhances Video

The video and audio embellishments on Pioneer's VSX-5000(BK) digital receiver makes this a high-end surround sound processor. The unit features Dolby, studio, and stadium surround for theater-like audio effects. An adjustable



For additional information,
circle no. 145 on Reader Service Card.

video enhancer circuit has a split-screen feature so that an enhanced picture can be compared with an untouched picture for distortion-free fine tuning. A video noise filter also clears up snow in the picture.

The amplifier delivers 100 watts-per-channel in stereo and, in surround, 70 watts-per-channel for front speakers and 10 watts-per-channel for rear speakers. Three video inputs with stereo audio jacks allow simultaneous recording on or between two sources. Separate video and audio switching allows for FM stereo/TV simulcast recording. The AM/FM tuner accepts both antenna and cable FM inputs.

Price: \$569.95.

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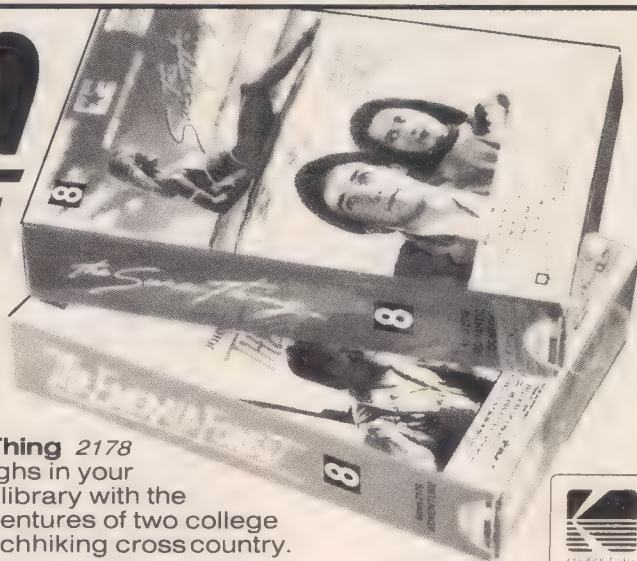
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HG Super Video Tapes

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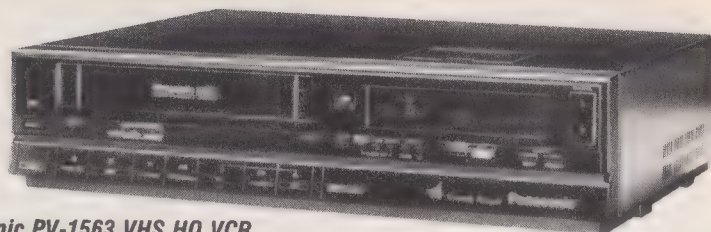
Finally, with a lifetime guarantee, you can rest assured that every repeat performance will be just as sharp and clear as the first recording you ever made.

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New Products



Panasonic PV-1563 VHS HQ VCR

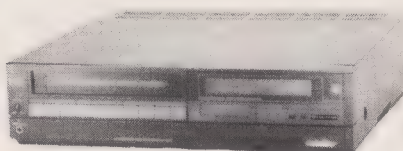
Panasonic Steps Up With Mid-Priced VCRs

Panasonic's new middle-of-the line VHS VCRs promise high-end performance. The PV-1560, PV-1562, and PV-1563 use four video heads and HQ circuitry to deliver an improved picture. All are cable-compatible and have see-through windows. Dolby noise reduction eliminates audio hiss on tapes with linear audio tracks.

Both the PV-1560 and the PV-1562 have four-program/two-week timers that link up with 93-channel tuners. The former has 14 presets while the PV-1562's voltage-synthesized tuner can receive all the stations. Linear stereo plays back prerecorded stereo tapes. The 1562 also has an MPX jack that lets you connect an MTS stereo decoder. The PV-1563 is identical to the 1562 except that it has the MTS decoder built in.

Prices: PV-1560, n.a.; PV-1562, \$750; PV-1563, \$775.

For additional information,
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Goldstar GHV-8200M VHS HQ VCR

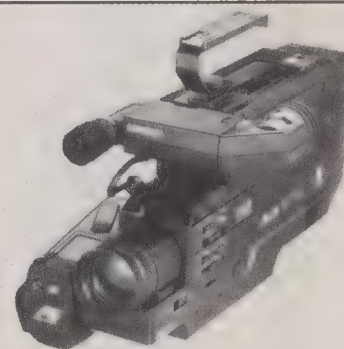
Goldstar Offers Three VHS VCRs

Goldstar, the Korean electronics manufacturer, offers three economical VHS VCRs. The two-video-head machines have HQ picture enhancement circuits for sharper outlines and enhanced detail. The decks playback and record at SP, LP, and SLP. Leading the entries is the stripped down GHV-1233M. Its four event/two week timer links up with a 110-channel, cable-compatible tuner.

The step up is the GHV-1240M. It adds four events for a total of eight timed recordings over two weeks. The voltage synthesized tuner receives 107 channels. At the top of the line is the GHV-8200M, a Hi-Fi MTS stereo deck with SAP capability. All the VCRs have infrared remote controls.

Prices: GHV-1233M, \$489.95; GHV-1240M, \$519.95; GHV-8200M, \$649.95.

For additional information,
circle no. 148 on Reader Service Card.



Minolta Camcorder Promises Truer Colors

Minolta's new full-sized VHS camcorder features an MOS image sensor it says picks up truer colors. The sensor receives four pixel points; previous models only picked up three. The CR-1200S AF shoots in light as low as seven lux and has HQ circuitry for sharper pictures and enhanced detail. A date/time generator keeps track of recordings, and a large two-thirds inch adjustable electronic viewfinder can be used for instant playback.

The versatile 11.5 to 69 mm f/1.2 6x power zoom lens with macro has auto focus for easy shooting. An automatic iris can be controlled for fade-ins and fade-outs. Supplied accessories include an RF converter, a two-hour battery, cables, and adapters.

Price: \$2085.

For additional information,
circle no. 147 on Reader Service Card.

Copyguard Killer Targets Macrovision

DT Electronics claims its new Video Copyguard Killer defeats Macrovision-encoded videos, the process that prevents duplication of videocassettes. DT, careful to say that the Killer is not for illegal duplication, is offering it as a way to improve the video picture, in response to complaints about picture flashing and jitter from Macrovision-encoded tapes on monitors with direct video inputs. DT's unit replaces the encoding with a synched signal. The Killer includes a switchable image enhancer and video noise reduction circuits.

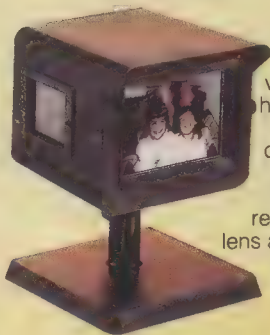
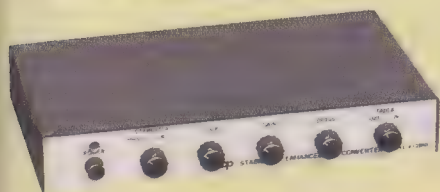
Price: \$230.

For additional information,
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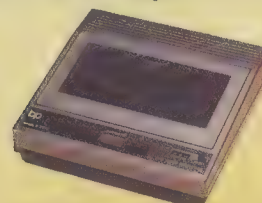
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Model V-1880

\$79⁹⁵

Macro Lens Attachment
Model V-14

\$14⁹⁵

Model V-1701

\$34⁹⁵

Don't risk worn-down heads and tape damage by rewinding on your VCR. BP Tape Rewinders feature counter, soft button action, controlled speed and automatic shutoff.

Model V-7779

VHS **\$49⁹⁵**

Model V-7780

BETA **\$49⁹⁵**

A small investment...buys

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PERFORMANCE!
Get the most out of your video and stereo equipment

Add Stereo to your Video



The mini speaker with maxi sound. 3" long throw woofer; 1" soft dome tweeter; 2" extended midrange speaker. Max power 50 watts.

\$29⁹⁵
per pair

Model HF-9

FM Antenna fine-tunes your fm/stereo reception.



You'll get clear, crisp, undistorted sound from this high quality, directional FM antenna. Mounts instantly indoors, comes complete with coaxial cable and transformer.

\$34⁹⁵

Model FM-9700

Get true-to-life color...and reduce noise...with Audio Video Color Processor.



This versatile color processor corrects off color tape, eliminates single color dominance and restores sharpness in detail. Plus, it stabilizes copy guarded tapes and filters audio noise.

\$149⁹⁵

Model V-1895

Send for **FREE** catalog of hundreds of items.
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\$1,001-\$1,500	\$16.50
\$1,501-\$2,000	\$20.00
\$2,001 and up	\$25.00

For additional information, circle No. 26 on Reader Service Card.

Teleonic Synthesizes Stereo From Any TV

Any TV broadcast can be heard through your audio system by using the Teleonic 2001 stereo synthesizer. The small circuit box not only splits sound into two channels, but adds depth by phasing the signal between the speakers. Two twin-lead cables are installed inside a TV by a qualified technician. Left and right audio outputs are then linked to your own amplifier and speakers.

Price: \$54.95 excluding installation.

For additional information,
circle no. 150 on Reader Service Card.



Akai Budget VCR Eases Programming

Programming is simplified with Akai's VS-125U budget VHS VCR. Onscreen prompts make setting the four event/two

week timer simple. The two-head machine uses a 107-channel, cable-compatible tuner with direct access to 32 stations. A window on the front-loading deck confirms tape movement. Auto editing backspace, auto power on, an infrared remote control, and HQ recording circuitry also enhance the operation of this low-end VCR.

Price: \$600.

For additional information,
circle no. 151 on Reader Service Card.

Going to extremes for stereo TV?

Get true MTS stereo on any TV with F.R.E.D.



Now it's easy to enjoy the hot new MTS Stereo Broadcasts with F.R.E.D., the Friendly Recoton Entertainment Decoder. Simple to install, he delivers theater-like sound through your home stereo system—or with a pair of amplified speakers.

And for more video-sonic pleasure, F.R.E.D. also synthesizes dynamic stereo on non-stereo broadcasts. Do something great for your ears without paying an arm and a leg. Get F.R.E.D. today and enter a whole new dimension of home entertainment.

RECOTON® THE PROVEN PERFORMERS

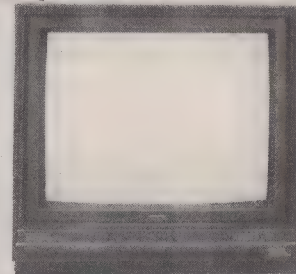
Audio/Video Accessory Specialists

DEPT. F.R.E.D.-C 46-23 CRANE STREET, LONG ISLAND CITY, NY 11101 1-800-RECOTON



MTS Monitor/Receiver From Marantz

The newest 26-inch monitor/receiver from Marantz delivers a manufacturer-rated minimum horizontal resolution of 360 lines. The MR260 142-channel, cable-compatible tuner also receives MTS



stereo and SAP with dbx noise reduction. Four video sources can be linked to the set, and two VCRs can be switched for independent dubbing while watching broadcast TV.

Price: \$999.95.

For additional information,
circle no. 152 on Reader Service Card.

New Infinity TV Emphasizes Audio

Infinity Systems' Reference Standard TV (RSTV) has the latest in audio enhancements. Unlike other popular front-projection TVs, its 178-channel, cable-compatible tuner is built-in. An internal amplifier and speakers deliver stereo from MTS and surround sound decoders. The manufacturer rates horizontal resolution at 400 lines. Two RF inputs, two sets of direct video inputs, and RGB and TTL computer inputs link up the rest of your video system.

Price: \$5500.

For additional information,
circle no. 153 on Reader Service Card.



Even if you don't own this Sony,




you can own this one.

No matter what TV and VCR you own, the new Sony Beta and VHS videotapes will improve your picture.

Because the same thing that makes Sony TVs better makes Sony videotape better: Sony technology.

The tape you see above is new Sony PRO-X. Its ultra-fine Vivax™ particles deliver extraordinary video *and* audio recording characteristics. For exacting videophiles, the best choice is the best Sony videotape: PRO-X.



Then there's new ESX-HiFi, with an extremely high signal-to-noise ratio. It's the right answer for hi-fi recording at an affordable price.

Our new Sony ES-HG is a perfect



example of how Sony Vivax magnetic particles can hold more video "information" to give you better picture quality. Even at the slower speeds that are so tough on tape.

New Sony Vivax particles are in dependable Dynamicron®, too, for superior video and audio at an economical price. You can record on Sony Dynamicron over and over with sharp, clear results over and over.

So now you know you can own a great Sony picture for the price of a videotape. And once you do own one, you'll clearly see why the Sony is the one and only videotape to buy.



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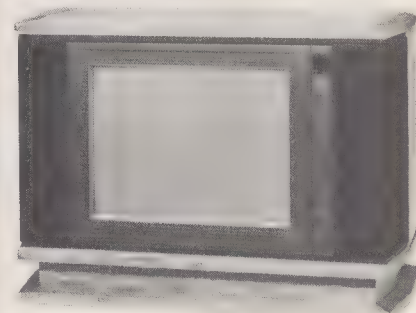


© 1985 Movies Unlimited Inc.

New Products

NEC Squares Off With 27-Inch Console TV

NEC's first console TV is also its first 27-inch model. The KX-2750A's square-cornered edges reduce geometric distortion of the picture. The 166-channel, cable-compatible set tunes in MTS stereo and SAP broadcasts.



Two sets of video inputs and outputs as well as variable audio outputs for connection of surround sound add-ons link it to external gear. Three RF inputs and a decoder output connect cable, broadcast TV, and a third source such as a computer or a video game. An onscreen display conveys operating instructions from the infrared remote control.

Price: \$1250.

For additional information, circle no. 154 on Reader Service Card.



RCA 'Power Safe' Shields Video Gear

Anyone who has suffered from burned out video equipment during a thunderstorm has learned the value of surge protectors the hard way. RCA offers two new models, the Power Safe and Power Safe Plus. The six-outlet strips suppress transient voltage surges and spikes. The Power Safe Plus also dissipates electronic noise interference with a high frequency filter.

Prices: Power Safe, \$29.95; Power Safe Plus, \$44.95.

For additional information, circle no. 155 on Reader Service Card.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S SHOCK VALUE

\$24.95
Sugg. Retail Price

THE BEST OF FEAR, OBSESSION AND MURDER.



MCA is offering a collection of Hitchcock's finest films on videocassette for only \$24.95 each suggested retail.

That's right, 13 masterpieces from the master of murder and mayhem. They're all guaranteed to make your blood run cold and your heart beat a little faster.

So, what are you waiting for? Run over to your nearest video retailer and pick up some shocking values from MCA.

The Birds • Family Plot • Frenzy •
The Man Who Knew Too Much • Marnie •
Psycho • Rear Window • Rope • Saboteur • Topaz •
Torn Curtain • The Trouble With Harry • Vertigo

**13 CLASSIC THRILLERS AVAILABLE
ON VIDEOCASSETTE AT THIS LOW PRICE
FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY**

For additional information, circle No. 107 on Reader Service Card.



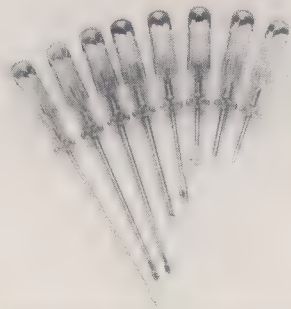
70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, CA 91608
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Fix It Yourself With VCR Tools

If you're a seasoned technician or just an amateur fiddler who wants to fix that broken VCR, you may want to look at Philips ECG video screwdrivers. The eight tools match the recesses that adjust a VCR's tape feed, tape tension, and other transport functions. The tools are available in both VHS and Beta versions. Vid buffs should be confident they have the appropriate know-how and testing equipment proper use of the tools requires.

Prices: n.a.

For additional information,
circle no. 156 on Reader Service Card.



dbx Switcher Adds Viewing Options

The Audio/Video Program Route Selector from dbx ties together three VCRs, a video disc player, and three audio tape decks. Any recording combination is possible, including audio mix from a tape

deck while dubbing video. The switcher, model DAV-600G, has one monitor output.

Price: \$399.

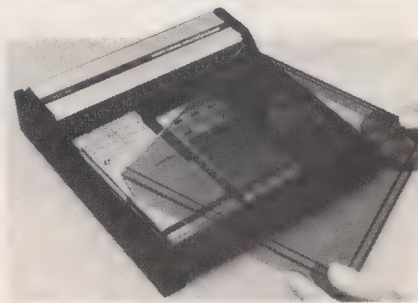
For additional information,
circle no. 157 on Reader Service Card.



Video Link Holds, Protects Remotes

Video Link has come up with a unique if not always practical solution to remote control clutter. The Remote Control Amplifier/Organizer holds three remote controls in a table-top box. A touch of the brushed aluminum bar on top of the box amplifies and disperses the infrared signals. A smoked plastic hood that covers the remote controls when not in use also holds a television schedule.

Price: \$59.95.



For additional information,
circle no. 158 on Reader Service Card.

Pressman® VCR Gallery of Games™

DOORWAYS TO ADVENTURE™ THE VCR GAME

FEATURING **COLORSCAN™** (works with any VCR).

Turn your VCR into over 8 million different adventures. Play along with famous film stars from 60 Hollywood film classics. Complete with VHS video-cassette, game cards, money and more....All for less than the price of a budget pre-recorded movie. Doorways to Adventure.™ It's so much fun it's wild.

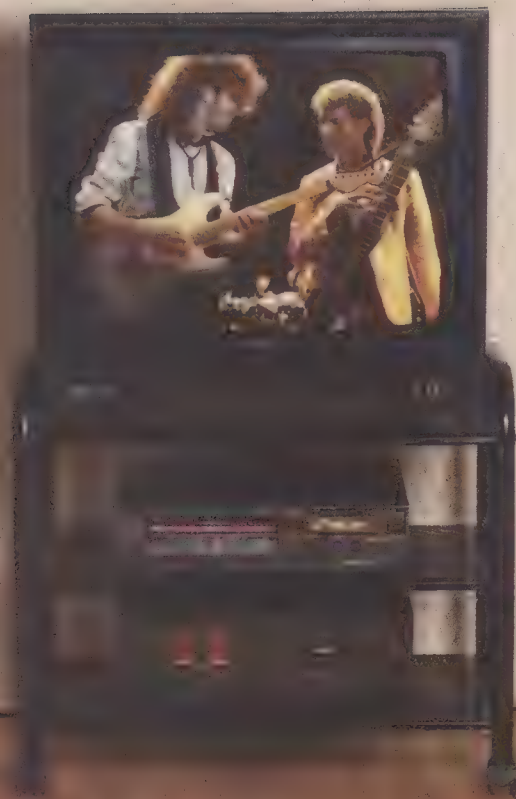


Pressman®
Games people play. Together.

Also look for Pressman's new VCR Game,
DOORWAYS TO HORROR.™

For 2 To 6 Players
Ages 10 To Adult

For additional information, circle No. 17 on Reader Service Card.



Without TDK Hi-Fi in your stereo VCR, you may as well sell your speakers.

To get the most out of your Hi-Fi/stereo VCR system, put the most in. Use TDK Hi-Fi video cassettes. They're specifically designed for today's sophisticated VHS and Beta VCR's. TDK Hi-Fi/stereo video cassettes capture and deliver purer, clearer and more dynamic sound throughout the entire audio range of your system. So you can now enjoy the dimensional excitement of Hi-Fidelity VCR sound—to the max.

Technically superior, TDK Hi-Fi has one of the lowest dropout rates in its class. That's because of our new ultra-refined Super Avilyn particles and superior coating technology. Plus TDK's dust-proof leader, which minimizes electrostatic buildup. Additionally, our SQ mechanism delivers the smoothest running performance of virtually any video cassette.

With anything less than TDK Hi-Fi in your Hi-Fi/stereo VCR, you may as well listen to the walls. Get it today and put your Hi-Fi video system to maximum use. Speakers and all.

TDK THE ART OF PERFORMANCE.

TDK is the world's leading manufacturer of audio & video cassettes and floppy disk products.

For additional information, circle No. 18 on Reader Service Card.



Video Systems by Sansui.
Simulated TV Picture.

"It is rare in audio to find a clearcut 'best' of anything, but in film surround decoders, the Shure is a hands-down winner."

— Stereophile Magazine
Vol. 9, No. 2



Step beyond ordinary Dolby Surround® processors.

The Shure HTS 5000 Home Theater Sound System. Enjoy the thrill of genuine Dolby motion picture sound in your living room. No other home system comes close.

For the few. At a few select dealers.

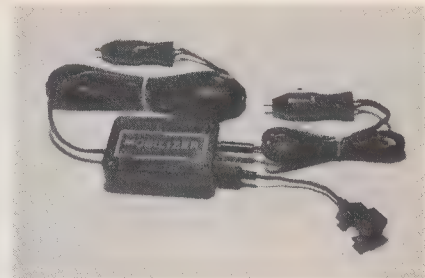
SHURE
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This fine product is distributed exclusively through Shure ULTRA® Group dealers. For the name and location of your nearest dealer, call (312) 866-2608. Dolby Surround® is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation.

For additional information, circle No. 159 on Reader Service Card.

New Products



On The Road Charging With The Mobilizer

Accu-sembly's Mobilizer 1 charges camcorder batteries from your car's cigarette lighter. The DC to DC charger works with all 12-volt lead acid batteries, gel cell batteries rated at 2 Ah or greater, and 12-volt Nickel-Cadmium batteries rated at 800 mAh or greater. An LED indicator tells you when charging is complete. Price: \$59.95.

For additional information,
circle no. 159 on Reader Service Card.

Computer To Video In One Easy Step

The RGB-NTSC Encoder (ENC-1) converts analog RGB (red, green, blue) computer signals to a composite NTSC signal for display on a monitor or for recording on a VCR. This piece of specialty equipment from Communications Specialists in Commack, N.Y. has a nine-pin DIN female input, a BNC female output, and its own power supply. The ENC-1 locks onto the color burst portion of a video signal to prevent "dot" or chroma crawl along the edges of a picture—a hazard when converting computer signals to video. Price: \$295.

For additional information,
circle no. 160 on Reader Service Card.



Untangle The Mess With Cables Away

Playback, Inc., a Charlestown, Mass. video production company, has an ingenious solution to tangled cables—Cables Away, an elastic neoprene strip that wraps around cables and fastens with velcro straps. The one by four-inch strips come in bags of five. Price: \$9.90.

For additional information,
circle no. 161 on Reader Service Card.



**The best brains
in television.**

Building a breakthrough color TV takes brains: the computer brains of IC chips. Unlike the analog workings of conventional TVs, these new chips from NEC store, process, and control the picture in digital form. So TV performance can be raised to a higher level. The level of NEC Digital Television.

Take a look at our 26" square picture. You'll see richer color, more contrast, more resolution, and more picture than ever before.* With a VCR connected, NEC's digital Picture-in-Picture lets you watch two shows at the same time on the same screen. And our three-way digital freeze lets you stop even the

fastest running back in his tracks.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that the company behind this surprising new TV is NEC. We're at the forefront of computers, monitors, and broadcast video. And that takes real brains.

NEC[®]

We bring high technology home.

NEC Home Electronics (U.S.A.), Inc., 1255 Michael Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191

*Prizzi's Honor™ available exclusively from Vestron Video

*Model DT-2680A with 26" screen, measured diagonally. 500 lines horizontal resolution, via video inputs. TV reception simulated.

For additional information, circle No. 20 on Reader Service Card.

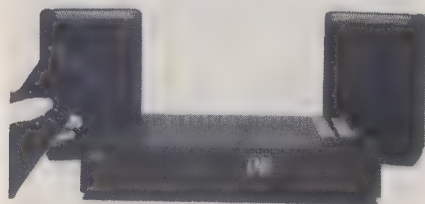


Samsung Introduces 19-Inch Cable Ready TV

Samsung's new TC9833T television features a 139-channel quartz lock, frequency-synthesized express tuner with an LED display, and feather-touch controls. It also has a wireless remote control with power, volume, and channel selection. The picture tube uses a quick-start, in-line gun with a slotted mask and black matrix for high quality. The chassis is solid state, and the set comes with CATV and MATV connectors, and a simulated wood grain cabinet.

Price: \$389.95.

For additional information,
circle No. 129 on Reader Service Card.



Universal Offers New MTS Decoder

Universal Security Instruments is introducing an MTS stereo decoder system that comes with stereo amplifiers, two speakers, and a wireless remote control. The V-7640 TV/Cable Tuner and Converter features 140-channel tuning for VHF, UHF, and cable channels, shielded speakers for video use, and a comprehensive display panel. It can sense whether a signal is stereo or monaural, and convert the mono signal into synthesized stereo. The full-function remote features an unlimited favorite channel memory, and an SAP/stereo/mono selector.

Price: \$269 to \$349.

For additional information,
circle No. 130 on Reader Service Card.

History repeats itself! Presenting "The Streisand Specials."

Barbra Streisand's legendary mid-sixties television specials gave America its first long, close-up look at the 23-year-old entertainer that Broadway critics were raving about, and record buyers were taking to the top of the album charts.

Spectacular events in their day, **THE STREISAND SPECIALS** have never been rebroadcast, and have taken on an almost mythical status over the years. Now, for the first time in twenty years, you can see **"THE STREISAND SPECIALS MY NAME IS BARBRA"** and **"COLOR ME BARBRA."**

And, for the first time ever, you can own them on home video.

Also for the first time ever, Barbra Streisand looks back on these career milestones in reflective introductions taped especially for this series.

**HER FANS HAVE WAITED 20 YEARS TO SEE THEM AGAIN.
NOW YOU CAN OWN THEM FOREVER.**

My Name is Barbra

"The classic hour of entertainment in any field" according to one critic, here are 23 brilliant songs, including Barbra's classic "People" and a stunning goosebump-raising first public performance of "My Man". This program won a total of five Emmy awards in 1965 including "Outstanding Program" and "Outstanding Individual Achievement in Entertainment."

Color Me Barbra

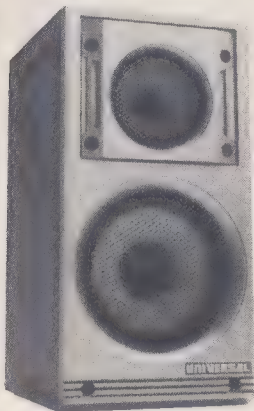
This visually sumptuous musical odyssey was called "a one-woman tour de force of song and sex appeal" by Newsweek in 1966. It features 26 songs in settings as colorful and far-ranging as the Philadelphia museum and a circus-full of baby animals. After one show-stopping performance after the next, one reviewer describes the finale: "As the camera pulls back, you get a sense that this is the moment the whole world has fallen at her feet. Barbra takes a bow."



Programs are available individually and, for a limited time only, packaged together as a specially-priced gift set.



© 1986
1986 CBS
The following
are the names of
the people who
were on the
show.

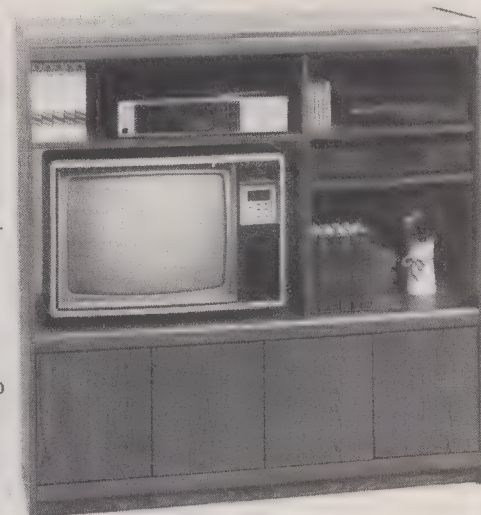


Wireless Speaker Suitable for Vid Gear

Universal Security Instruments' new wireless remote speaker system provides an economical way for consumers to expand the audio capabilities of their video systems. The V-8500 operates by using household AC power lines as the signal carrier. The signal decoder is built into the speaker itself. The two-way speakers can be connected to any AC outlet, and can be used with virtually any audio signal source, from VCRs and projection TVs to FM receivers. More than one system can be set up at a time,

giving a house sound in every room.

The system comes with a transmitter, which has to be hooked up to the left and right audio outputs of the sound source you choose. The system comes with two speakers; additional speakers



Gusdorf Creates New Entertainment Center

The Gusdorf Corporation's new Deluxe Entertainment Center, Model 4450, features an oak finish that complements the black-and-silver high tech look of most of today's electronic equipment. The center is highlighted with a horizontal bronze trim, and has a special protective surface to guard against scratches and stains.

At the right, the audio section of the 4450 features a push-to-open, safety glass door. Both shelves in the audio section adjust in height, enabling them to accommodate differently sized pieces of equipment. The video section, on the left, can accommodate TVs with 19 to 26-inch screens. The two lower storage cabinets also have magnetically secured doors with one adjustable shelf on each side.

Price: \$249.95.

For additional information,
circle No. 132 on Reader Service Card.

can be purchased separately.

Prices: \$98.99 for transmitter and speaker/receiver; \$59.99 for each additional speaker.

For additional information,
circle No. 131 on Reader Service Card.



Has complex wiring made you lose your appetite?

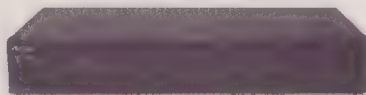
You start with a basic recipe: a television and a VCR. For spice, add a Vidicraft Detailer® IV for image enhancement, and maybe a Vidicraft Special Effects Generator for that MTV flavor. For variety, throw in a Dolby digital video disc for audio overdubbing. For color, the Vidicraft A/V Processor provides that special touch.

Now look behind your entertainment center and see what you've got. Spaghetti.

The Audio/Video Switcher is a digital matrix

design. Four video and stereo audio inputs can be easily switched without loss of quality in any combination to four video and stereo audio outputs. Everything is done with the touch of a button, instantly. No more rewiring, no more delays. Just add electricity and stir.

So if you like to order the best thing on the menu, pull up a chair. The A/V Switcher from Vidicraft is the piece-d'resistance. Bon Appetit.



VIDICRAFT®

Deliberately Excellent

Call or write for your nearest authorized dealer

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For additional information, circle No. 23 on Reader Service Card.

The gods gave them
earth,
wind,
fire,
water
...and this.



THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY

An African bushman discovers a discarded soda bottle that ultimately brings him face to face with modern man for the first time in **THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY**. Now this heartwarming, hilarious,

highly entertaining yet thought provoking comedy is available on videocassette to drive everyone crazy...with laughter. From Playhouse Video.



Recorded in Hi-Fi

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 10

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by National Captioning Institute
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Source: Variety, "Time Film Rental" July 1988

20th CENTURY FOX RELEASE

"THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY" a C.F.A. FILMS PRODUCTION

Starring MARIUS W. KAO, THE BUSHMAN as "the bushman"

Produced and Directed by JAMIE UYS



They Scream Louder in Color!



PLUS 2 MORE
CLASSIC ZOMBIE THINS!

WALKER BLOOD
\$14.95

WALKER BLOOD
\$14.95



\$29.95
Suggested Retail Price
500 VHS BETA
Running Time
96 Minutes

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For additional information circle No. 25 on Reader Service Card.

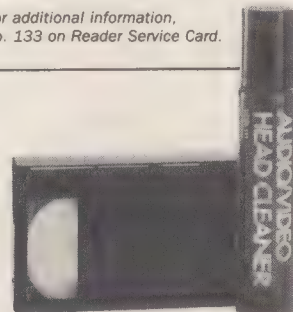
New Products

Akai Introduces First Blank Tape

Akai America is introducing its first blank videotape in several years: a T-120 High Quality formulation for VHS only. According to the company, it offers superior colors with extremely low noise and few dropouts, making it ideally suited to HQ VCRs. The black package is decorated with brightly-colored balloons and gold lettering.

Price: \$5.99

For additional information,
circle No. 133 on Reader Service Card.



Compact Cleaner For Camcorders

Now that Compact VHS is making a comeback, the Geneva Group of Companies is introducing a wet-type video head cleaner especially for camcorders that use the mini video format. The PF-360 Video Head Cleaner employs a spun-bond cleaning material that doesn't shed, and a cleaning solution that does not use alcohol or leave a residue.

Price: \$29.95

For additional information,
circle No. 134 on Reader Service Card.

RCA Debuts Long-Play Rechargeable Battery

RCA's new AVO46 12-volt battery is designed for use with VCRs, camcorders, TVs, camera lights, computers, and almost any other 12-volt application up to 110 watts. It is rated at 4.5 ampere hours, and features an 11-cell design, as opposed to the typical 10-cell design. This increases capacity and running time. It's sealed to prevent leakage, and protected against damage by a self-resetting circuit breaker and a replaceable fuse.

RCA says the AVO46 can be recharged overnight, will not be harmed by long storage, and can be used throughout a wide range of temperatures. The recharger receptacle is compatible with RCA car cords, such as the DCC012 and the AV001. The charger that comes with the battery is UL listed. The battery comes in a compact carrying case, and weighs 4.4 pounds. A belt clip and shoulder strap are included.

Price: \$124.95.

For additional information,
circle No. 135 on Reader Service Card.

Your laugh mode
is about to

SHORT CIRCUIT

What happens when a robot upgrades itself to human status? An uncomputable number of laughs, that's what.

Starring Ally Sheedy (WARGAMES and THE BREAKFAST CLUB) and Steve Guttenberg (BAD MEDICINE and COGOON), SHORT CIRCUIT is the story of No. 5, a robot who "comes alive" to the dismay of his military masters.

How he and his two legitimately human best friends try to thwart the military from literally taking him apart makes for one of the most engaging and entertaining movies you've ever seen.

Now, SHORT CIRCUIT, one of the smash comedy hits of 1986, is available on videocassette from CBS/FOX VIDEO. Which means you can laugh till your circuits overload in the privacy of your own home.

AVAILABLE ON VIDEOCASSETTE

Something
wonderful has happened...
No.5 is alive



TRI-STAR PICTURES AND PSO PRESENT

A TURMAN-FOSTER COMPANY PRODUCTION A JOHN BADHAM FILM

"SHORT CIRCUIT" ALLY SHEEDY STEVE GUTTENBERG

FISHER STEVENS AUSTIN PENDLETON G.W. BAILEY Music by DAVID SHIRE

Associate Producers GARY FOSTER and DANA SATLER Supervising Producer GREGG CHAMPION

Co-Producer DENNIS JONES Executive Producers MARK DAMON and JOHN HYDE

Film Edited by FRANK MORRISS Written by S.S. WILSON & BRENT MADDOCK

Produced by DAVID FOSTER and LAWRENCE TURMAN

Directed by JOHN BADHAM PANAVISION

A TRI-STAR RELEASE

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PSO VIDEO

CBS
FOX
VIDEO

Fine Tuning

Your Video Questions Answered

Blind Alley

Q *I have a JVC HR-2650U portable VHS. When the machine sits on the TV it records fine, but when I carry the unit it doesn't record the video, just the audio. What could be causing this problem?*

*Stanley Baclawski
Brooklyn, N.Y.*

A Something must be loose inside since it won't record when being carried. When you take it outdoors, you're probably carrying it vertically from your shoulder. Try setting the deck down on a level surface, so that it's in the same horizontal position as in your home.

That may help but your best bet is to get it to a shop for an examination, even if the problem goes away when you put it back on top of the TV. An intermittent problem today can become more serious tomorrow.

Antique Repeat

Q *In the June "TV Den," you made a comment about "Sony's absolutely awful 1978 SL-8600." Please explain. I bought an SL-8600 in September 1978 and still use it to play, record, and tape with my Sony HVC-2200 camera. I use it almost every day for one thing or another. Boy did that statement shock me!*

*Susan Condon
Saugus, Mass.*

A I'm glad your SL-8600 has lasted so long, been trouble-free, and given you so much use and enjoyment. When I called it "awful," I wasn't criticizing its utility as a VCR. When it was introduced, the VHS format was just gathering momentum and

the Sony machine was a disappointment.

The machine it replaced had two-speed recording, while the SL-8600 had only BII. It also had a one-event timer, while some VHS machines that debuted at the same time offered 4-event/7-day programmability. The VHS entries also had push-button tuners, while the SL-8600 stayed with the old-fashioned turret type tuner.

As an editing deck, the Beta was also poorer. Most other VCRs let you go from playback into pause mode then back into record. The SL-8600 locked this function out, forcing you to stop the tape, re-enter the record pause mode, and hope for the best. In these respects it was not as sophisticated or advanced as it should have been. The year it was on the market was pivotal for the Beta format. By the time Sony replaced it with the SL-5400—the first VCR with visible picture search—the company had lost a lot of ground to VHS.

Mileage Meter

Q *Does any manufacturer include a running time meter that engages only when a VCR is playing or recording? The meter should run only when the heads are moving. This would help us know when to clean the heads or carry out other regular servicing.*

*Christopher Craft
Columbia, S.C.*

A Quite a few VCRs sold to professionals have the feature you're describing. It's a small meter, looking much like a thermometer, that calculates the number of

hours of use the video heads get. Whenever they rotate, the meter moves. Videotape duplicators equip slave VCRs with meters like this to keep tabs on when it's time to clean or replace the video heads. I agree it would be worth adding to some consumer machines. We included it last year in our list of "ultimate VCR" features.

But so far, no dice. It's possible to have a meter like this added to a consumer deck, but it may cost you more than it's worth. Check it out with a good video serviceman, if you're interested, to see what it would cost.

Snail's Pace

Q *How can one obtain "slow motion" in shooting video? In the camera? Or in editing from one VCR to another? Is it only possible with VCRs like the Sony SuperBeta with that "finger-turn" wheel? I'm talking consumer equipment, of course, not studio stuff.*

*Jack Forman
Billings, Mont.*

A Video slow motion can't be obtained "in the camera." Whatever capabilities you get come from the VCR. Film slow motion is achieved by speeding up the frame rate. If 24 frames-per-second (fps) is normal, then a speed of 96 fps would result in a quarter speed slow motion effect when that footage is projected at the 24 fps rate.

A few specialized videotape recorders can record more than the 30 fps that's considered normal. When that tape is played back, a slow motion effect is obtained. But the usual procedure is just to slow down the tape, to between 1/30 and

1/4 speed, depending on the VCR. Sony's SL-HF900 and SL-HF750 have the Jog Shuttle to which you refer, and their slow motion effects are very good. But many other VCRs offer equivalent slow motion. The best are obtained by machines using "double azimuth" heads, which display pictures on a field-by-field basis, rather than a frame basis, to eliminate blurring.

Slow motion effects like these can be copied onto another VCR. But switching in and out of the slow-mo speed can be tricky. The picture may jump slightly on the screen before settling down. For regular viewing, that's not a problem, but it's a nuisance if you're copying the effect.

Hang in there. Picture perfect digital slow motion effects, using computer still stores, are just around the corner. Two such Toshiba VHS machines, the DX-3 and the DX-7, may be in stores by the time you read this.

Video Pals

Q *Can blank videotapes purchased for use in the United States be used to tape programs on Europe's PAL system?*

*Leslie K. Fernandez
Fort Worth, Tex.*

A Yes. The tapes sold here are the same as VHS tapes sold all over the world. The only difference is in length. But since the VCRs sold in Europe and elsewhere are designed for PAL or SECAM systems, the speed of the tape through the machines differs from ours. Consequently, a T-120 tape bought here won't deliver

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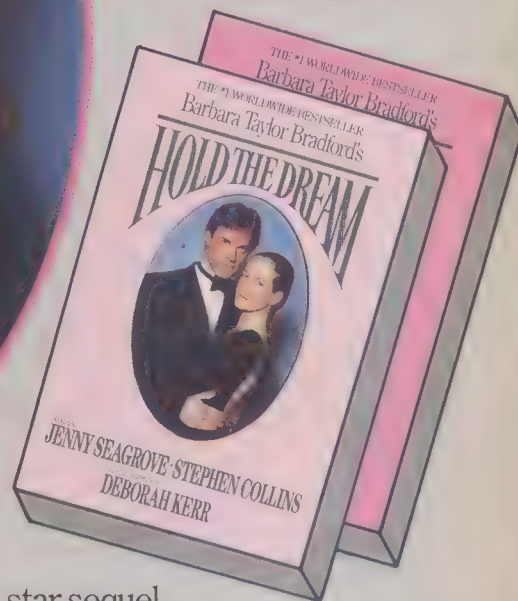


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two hours if it's used on a PAL VHS machine. It will be longer, closer to three hours, based on PAL's standard speed.

The reverse is also true: VHS tapes sold in Europe will work on our VCRs. Just don't rely on the running times quoted on the box, which are based on other tape speeds. If you want to know exactly how long a tape will last, get out your calculator. The length of the tape (in feet or meters) is almost always on the box, and if you know the VCR's tape speed, which is in your instruction manual, you can calculate the running time.

Nuptials Nipped

Q *I recently taped a friend's wedding. When I viewed the tape, I discovered the picture was barely visible because of heavy snow. I tried the tape in several other VCRs and they all displayed the same problem. Evidently one of the video heads clogged and every other video frame is distorted by snow.*

But when I play the tape in any special effects mode, like slow motion or pause, it plays back very cleanly. Is there any way I can salvage this valuable tape? I'm considering copying it in the speed search mode and then slowing it down and recopying it, then audio dubbing the sound back in.

*Rupert Haller
Jersey City, N.J.*

A As you've discovered, a few of the VCRs that offer "field" special effects can bypass every other bad field (not the "frame" you describe since one video head records one field) when you activate the slow motion or still mode. But the process you describe to rescue the tape won't work. The mind boggles at the prospect of playing it back at double speed to copy it, then slowing that copy down to half speed, then re-dubbing the audio.

There is simply no consumer equipment that can get you out of this mess. About the only way it could be done would be to copy each good field, one at a time, onto a professional videotape recorder that can do frame-by-frame assemble edits. A 20-minute tape, therefore, would need 36,000 such cuts, based on 30 good fields for every second, rather than the 60 there normally. Moreover, in order not to double the speed of the tape, you'd have to record each field twice to replace the bad ones that are missing. This would give the finished tape a jerky motion. Assuming all this could be done, you'll need to dub the audio back onto the tape and keep it in sync!

Why don't you try to save the day with a new tape consisting of a montage of still photos of the wedding with a suitable background score dubbed in?

Dew Wop

Q *I own an RCA VBT-200 VHS VCR, manufactured in the 1970s. When I use the machine in a room where the temperature is cool, I get only two hours of taping before it stops on its own. Why is this happening and what should be replaced to make it function properly?*

*Spiros Kanellios
Dracut, Mass.*

A All VCRs, old and new, have a sensor that automatically turns them off if there's too much moisture in the air. If the air is damp, there's a risk condensation may form on the shiny surface of the video drum, which would cause the tape to stick to the video heads.

You don't say how cool or damp your room is but it's apparently affecting the VCR's dew sensing circuit. Try warming up the room or moving the VCR. It's also possible that, given the age of the machine, the sensor is not responding properly and may be shutting the VCR prematurely, even if the room isn't that damp or cold. In that event, you'll have to take it in for servicing.

VIDEO welcomes your questions. Please do not enclose self-addressed envelopes as the volume of mail does not allow personal replies. Questions may be edited for clarity and space. Address letters to **Fine Tuning, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.**

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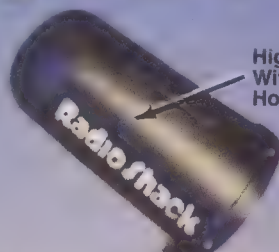
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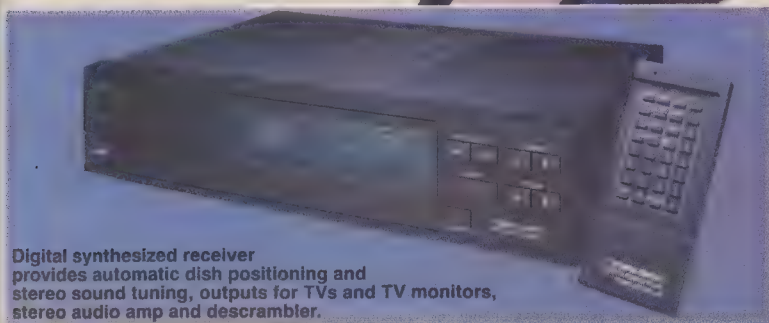
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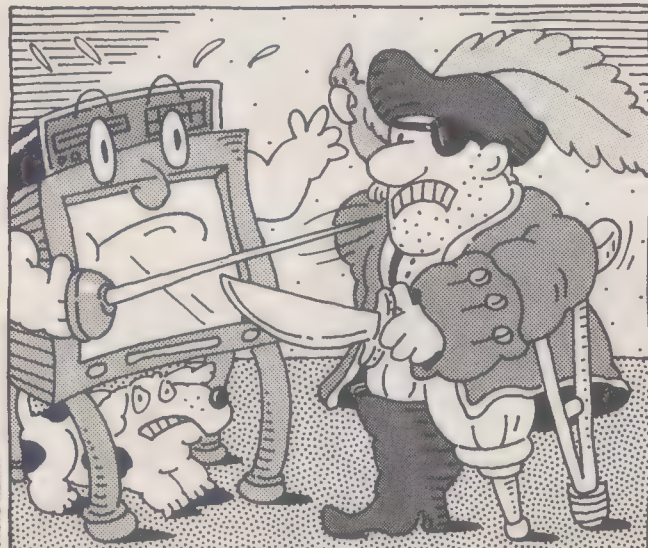
TV Den

Techniques and Technology

Inside Macrovision

by Roderick Woodcock

After ten years of prosperity you would think the video software industry would finally stop pursuing the movie companies' Holy Grail—a foolproof anti-piracy system that makes it impossible to copy pre-recorded videocassettes. Think again.



The latest entry in the anti-piracy parade is a process called Macrovision which debuted a year ago when Embassy Home Video released *The Cotton Club*. It didn't always work. VHS copies of *The Cotton Club* (the first Beta copies were not encoded) could easily be made with many makes and models of VCR.

Macrovision often performs as advertised, giving would-be dubbers dark and muddy-looking copies, muting the picture completely at times. But because of the way Macrovision originally worked, certain combinations of players and recorders could bypass it, enabling would-be copyists to make acceptable dubs. And if the VCR doing the recording was

a Beta machine, the chances of getting a good copy increased significantly. If you happen to own a new 8mm VCR, it may well have the same ability, since the newest format is closer to Beta in design than to VHS.

Macrovision spokesmen admit many Beta VCRs can beat it since it was designed with the circuitry of VHS machines in mind. But Macrovision's development is continuing and it has proven effective enough at stopping casual duplication to convince more film companies to pay the company its royalties—estimated at two bits per tape. That's cheap insurance against piracy.

What's "casual" duplication? Some of you may already be guilty of this practice. It's the kind a lot of renters have taken to lately, now that the price of a VCR has dropped and the number of two-machine families has increased. Instead of renting two or three tapes and watching them overnight, some folks make dubs and return the originals the next day. Instead of having a non-stop movie session, they've "time-shifted" the tapes using copies they can watch whenever they want.

No doubt some folks erase these copies afterward, but chances are that many more are amassing video libraries. After all, blank tape is cheap, and the demand keeps rising. Today it's a billion dollar a year business that has surpassed the long-established audio cassette industry.

Cassette copies of feature movies represent lost revenue to the movie studios. How much is lost is hard to know. Industry spokesmen, who have a vested interest in

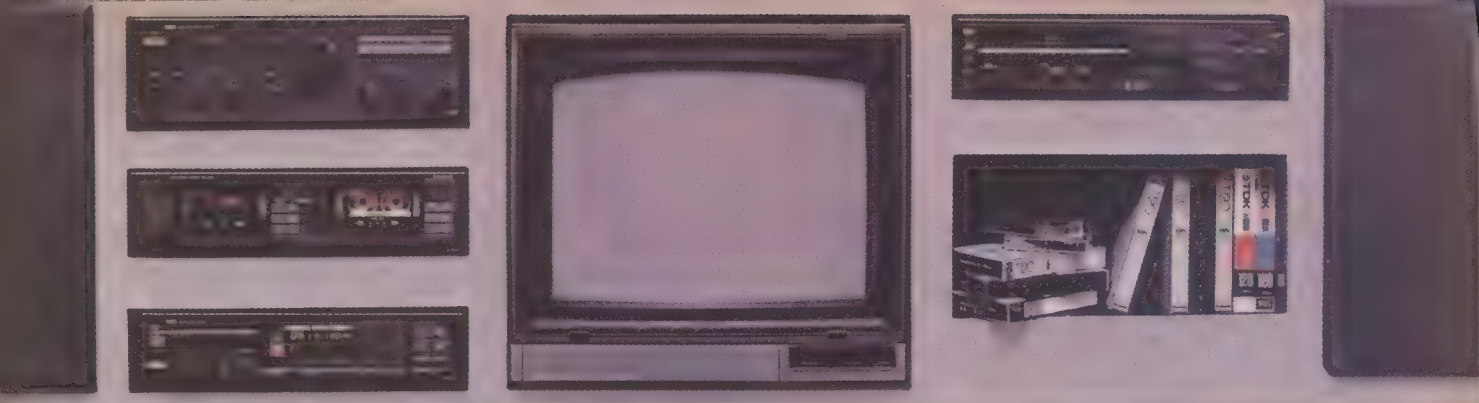
making the problem sound more significant than the national debt, talk in terms of "millions...maybe billions of dollars." Well, maybe. But there's no doubt that video piracy increases in proportion to the number of VCRs sold. That's why movie companies see Macrovision as the salvation of their coveted, lucrative copyrights.

However, apart from being occasionally ineffective, Macrovision has already generated complaints from consumers that the signal interferes with the legitimate viewing of movie cassettes at home. My own experiences tend to confirm the presence of problems. Some of the Macrovision tapes I examined were not as clear or as sharp as non-encoded tapes.

Depending on your equipment, the coded signals may actually be visible on your own screen. If the vertical sizing on your TV isn't adjusted well, or if the image is not aligned just right, you may see pulses in the picture.

Which brings us to the question of how Macrovision works. An important part of any TV signal is the vertical interval. That's the part of the signal you don't ordinarily see on-screen. It's out of sight at the top and bottom of the screen. If your set has a vertical hold control, you can adjust it so that the interval—a black horizontal bar—rolls into view.

The bar contains crucial timing signals needed to synchronize the TV picture. It also carries special signals, like closed captions for the hearing impaired and teletext data transmissions. It was also used, in earlier days, for previous anti-piracy systems.



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These archaic techniques sought to inhibit unauthorized copying by weakening a VCR's ability to stabilize the vertical sync pulse.

The system, however, also caused distortion in many ordinary TV sets. Without a vertical hold control, ■ feature that is considered obsolete for many modern TV sets, you couldn't dial out vertical rolling. So what you couldn't copy, you couldn't watch either. That type of anti-piracy signal spawned an entire industry—just to make little boxes called stabilizers to cure the vertical sync pulses inflicted by the copyguard.

Macrovision uses the vertical interval in a different way. If you have ■ Macrovision tape and a TV with a vertical hold control, you'll notice five large white squares in the top left corner of the interval bar. The squares alternate between an intense, white, pulsing signal and a less vibrant pulse. Any TV or VCR being fed from this output has to adjust the video level as the squares pulse. When the squares turn white, they force the VCR's automatic video gain control (AGC) to turn down. When the squares are dull gray, the video AGC turns up. The output level of the pulses is beyond the range of most VCRs, so the machines can't make ■ clear copy of a tape. When the signal is "hot," the AGC in the recording VCR

virtually turns itself off, muting the picture completely.

Macrovision CEO Gary Gwizdala says he considers the system to be effective more than 80 percent of the time. Many studios seem to agree that an 80 percent cure is better than none. Macrovision is now being used by Embassy, MCA, CBS/Fox, Disney, and Cannon/HBO. Warner Bros., RCA/Columbia, Vestron, and Karl-Lorimar may come on board in the near future.

As for consumer complaints, Gwizdala claims that 99 percent of the grievances laid at his door turn out to be unfounded, and are not necessarily related to Macrovision. It's often ■ question of how the consumer is using his VCR or TV, he says. To some extent, he's right. Surprisingly, many new VCR owners don't know how to adjust the tracking control. Sometimes the wiring system is to blame, and if the audio/video signal is looped from one VCR into another (not to copy, just to watch a tape), the picture quality will be substandard.

While many sets have automatic color controls, Gwizdala recommends turning the feature off so that it is easier for the TV to adjust to the signal from the VCR.

Macrovision is not a perfect antipiracy system, and its inventor and backers have never claimed it is. But it's effective enough to stop much of the living

room duplication taking place around the country, even though many video consumers think copying is more like helping yourself to a few grapes while shopping for groceries than a serious crime.

It's certainly not going to stop professional, high-tech pirates, most of whom use film prints to make video dubs before ■ movie reaches the home market. Even if they use ■ legitimate cassette as their master, the right equipment easily thwarts Macrovision. Macro-busters are already starting to appear. DT Electronics International in New York City recently began selling the Video Copyguard Killer, which it describes as "the first and only device capable of removing all copyguard interference." We doubt it will be the last.

Every videophile who buys or rents tapes has ■ stake in how well the latest anti-piracy system works. We've had some letters on the subject and, perhaps, after you read this column, we'll have more. We want to know if you have any trouble watching Macrovision-encoded tapes. And we'll also be watching Macrovision's further developments with interest, because if any of its "future improvements" result in a significant loss in video quality, it will be time to call a halt. After all, why should the honest consumer have to pay for the transgressions of the guilty? ▼

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The Third Format

A Report on 8mm Technology

Comparing Camcorders

by Roderick Woodcock

You've probably seen the "Video Hustler" commercial by now, in which a paunchy pool veteran with a Sony Handycam is upstaged by a clean-cut newcomer and his JVC Mini Video Movie. "Does yours have autofocus and power zoom?" asks the yuppie hustler. Nope. "A built-in monitor for instant replay?" Nope. "And can you play your 8mm tapes in any VHS machine?" Nope.

"Good, then let's shoot," says the upstart, as the crestfallen vet hits the road.

"Don't get caught behind the eight ball," admonishes a voice-over. "Get the JVC Mini VideoMovie."

The ad helped camcorders in general by focusing public attention on them. However, the Compact VHS Mini VideoMovie shouldn't be compared to the simpler record-only Handycam but to full-featured 8mm camcorders, of which there are now several. After trying them, it's clear that JVC's Compact hustler would have had a tougher game had the vet been wielding one instead of the Handycam.

Other 8mm camcorders equal or surpass the Compact VHS Mini Video Movie. They all have electronic viewfinders, playback capability, power zoom lenses with automatic focus, macro controls—the works. About the only thing they don't have is the ability to play back 8mm tapes in a VHS machine.

Recently, I compared their picture quality. I fastened a bracket to a tripod and mounted two camcorders—JVC's GR-C7 Compact VHS Mini Video Movie and also Kyocera's KD-200 8mm camcorder—side-by-side. Except a negligible degree of parallax, both machines recorded

the same scenes, at the same time, under identical lighting.

I tested the mini-VHS at both the fast SP speed (20 minutes per cassette) and the slower EP speed (60 minutes per tape) that's most likely to be favored by consumers who use this machine.

I zoomed and panned and tilted all around my back yard, in dim light and bright light, pausing both units simultaneously to test their editing abilities. I set up still lifes with brightly-colored objects including fruits and flowers, and a color bar test chart. I even aimed both camcorders at the sun, to test the burn-resistance of their CCD pick-ups.

To my surprise, the difference between the quality of the EP tapes and the SP tapes made on the Compact VHS wasn't as glaring as I had expected. SP tapes made on table-model VCRs often look noticeably better than EP tapes, especially if the VCR has more than two video heads and uses the wider heads to record the SP speed. But unlike earlier single-speed VHS camcorders, which are SP-only machines, the new Compact VHS camcorders use narrower video heads that have been optimized for the EP speed. Despite the benefit of HQ (high quality) signal processing, the picture quality didn't impress me that much. And the narrow heads have compromised the SP video quality, too. The compact VHS camcorder scans such tapes awkwardly, with wide noise bars and without any color output if you connect the VCR to a color set via the supplied A/V output cord.

The colors I got were

washed out, almost sepia quality in some instances; the reds, oranges, and blues lacked the "snap" they had in the comparable 8mm footage. That footage looked brighter, sharper, and more vibrant. I attribute most of these differences to the construction of the CCD chips both systems use. The Kyocera has a 250,000-pixel chip, uses a red, green, and blue (RGB) color stripe filter, and measures two-thirds of an inch diagonally. The Mini VideoMovie uses a smaller half-inch CCD chip that offers 210,000 pixels and uses a complementary color filter instead of the more accurate RGB stripe.

The 8mm scored again with sound. Compact VHS, as well as all full-size VHS camcorders, provides conventional, linear audio via a monaural sound stripe along the top edge of the tape. But 8mm records the audio along with the video using the amplitude frequency modulation (AFM) techniques shared by Beta and VHS Hi-Fi. About 8mm's only technical concession is that VHS's audio track can be replaced via audio dubbing when the tape is played on another machine, which you can't do with an original 8mm AFM track since it's mixed with the video.

On the other hand, every 8mm tape has room for a digital stereo audio track, which can be used for later dubbing using any of the 8mm machines with this feature. Most, like the Pioneer VE-D70, are table-model VCRs, but Kodak's Modular Video System can be both, and the Kodak MVS-5000 recorder has that digital audio ability built-in.



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The Third Format

There's little Compact VHS has going for it that isn't matched or bettered by any other 8mm camcorder, excluding the Handycam. It has a power zoom lens, record review, fade control, back light control, automatic focus, macro function, a counter with a memory, an optional wired remote control, and an electronic viewfinder. But so do all the 8mm camcorders. The Mini VideoMovie weighs only 2.9 pounds, *sans* cassette and battery pack of course, which, when added, boost its operating weight to nearly 4 lbs. But the new VX-801 8mm camcorder from Olympus weighs only 3.3 lbs., minus tape and battery.

In fact, the Olympus is slightly smaller overall, and offers the same features in a sleeker package. It also has a flying erase (FE) head for accurate editing, a feature shared with many other 8mm camcorders, including those from Sony, Kyocera, Sanyo, Aiwa, Pentax, and Minolta.

The 8mm format has a few more advantages over Compact VHS. You can record tapes as long as two hours (four on the two-speed Kodak) with rechargeable batteries that last about the same, though an hour seems optimum. You don't need an adapter to play them on another deck, nor do you have to exercise special care with the smaller tapes, since the shell is sealed well against dirt,

and has built-in reel locks to keep the tape from getting slack—something the Compact VHS instruction manuals warn you to guard against because of its wide-open shell.

For these and other reasons, I've found Compact VHS more difficult to work with. For example, the tape unthreads when you press stop, instead of staying wrapped around the drum as in most 8mm systems. A record lock lets you turn off the power without unthreading the tape, but it only works in record, not in playback, where the tape always unthreads if you turn off the power. In addition, if you re-cue the tape by enter-

***There's little
Compact VHS
has that isn't
matched or
bettered by
most 8mm
camcorders.***

ing record from the play mode, you'll end up with a stained edit point, since new video is being recorded directly on top of old, unerased video. That's the problem the FE heads were designed to overcome.

One welcome Compact VHS improvement is the addition of a "monitor mode" that lets you see a picture on the electronic viewfinder without even having a cassette in the machine. And with the A/V output cable included with the camcorder, you can use it as a camera head, recording the pictures and sound it picks up onto another VCR.

The "video hustler" commercial also states that "VHS and 8mm are not compatible." But the two formats are electronically compatible, making it possible to dub between one and the other. Home video, after all, is based on a common ground—the NTSC signal that feeds all our TVs.

By now, the commercial is history. But a more accurate incarnation may soon reappear, because a record-only Compact VHS is on its way, one that's smaller, lighter, and simpler than what's now available. And when it arrives, no doubt there will be a change of pace, for the simple features that were disparaged on the Handycam will suddenly become selling points for a new product from a rival format. ✓

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Fordham's

180 page 1987 catalog contains approximately 10,000 brand name products including: video equipment/accessories; audio accessories; speakers; cord sets and cables; computer accessories; telephones and accessories; CBs and accessories; auto stereos; connectors; microphones; CCTV monitors and equipment; audio accessories; test instruments. Products are illustrated and contain complete descriptions, specifications, applications and pricing. A FREE copy of the catalog is available from: Fordham Radio, 260 Motor Parkway, Hauppauge, NY 11788.

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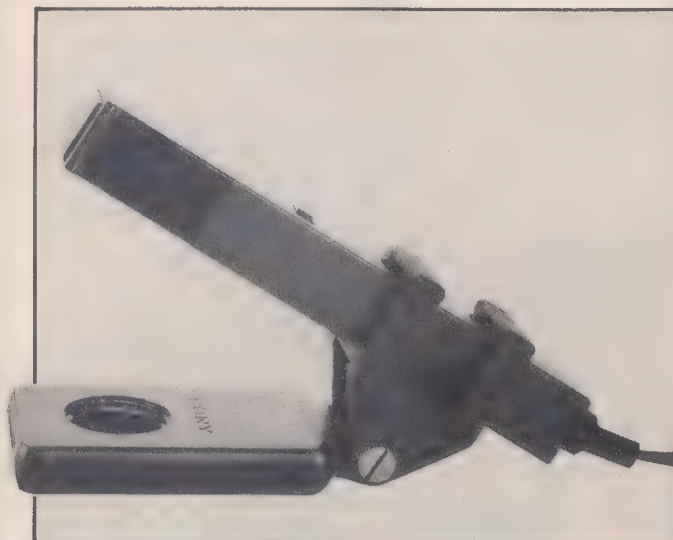
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Audio Input

The Sound Side of Video

Sonic Adventures

by Ivan Berger



Sony ECM-939LT Microphone

Sound counts for less in amateur video than in commercial TV—or as the cynics of another era said, illustrated radio. But sound adds up to more if we get it right. Without Hollywood's scripts, effects, and post-production facilities, amateurs will never

compete with the pros, but we can at least make tapes with soundtracks that don't distract or detract from the picture.

The first step toward improved sound is to hear what your microphones do. Whenever you're shooting, listen through a pair of headphones plugged into the camera or recorder. Those headphones should surround and seal off your ears so that what you hear comes mainly from the mic, not the world around you. Ideally, the phones should be sensitive enough so that even the limited power of a camera's headphone jack will mask most outside sounds.

Make sure the headphones' plug matches the jack on the camera. If it

doesn't, adapters—often packed with the phones—are readily available. Rigid metal or plastic adapters last longer than flexible adapter cables when putting a small, 3.5-mm (Walkman-style) plug into a large, 1/4-inch jack. But adapter cables stand up better when adapting a 1/4-inch plug to a 3.5-mm jack.

Since you'll probably be busy running your camera, you'll be happy to learn that there are only two things to listen and watch for—clear sound and unwanted noise.

Undesired noise comes from many sources. Indoors, the chief culprit is reverberation—sounds reflected from the room's ceiling, walls, and floor. The level of reverberant sound is usually about the same throughout a room, but the level of the sound that comes directly from your subject falls off with distance. There is direct sound and less reflected sound when the mic is closer to the subject.

Because we sense what kind of space we're in by listening to reverberation, a little of it isn't bad. It gives viewers an audio clue as to where you're shooting by involving their ears as well as eyes. Reverb can add warmth and atmosphere. But reflected sound easily becomes distracting, and too much muddies the audio track.

To capture quick, detailed sounds the ratio of direct to reflected sound must be high. Fast music and rapid speech should be recorded fairly "dry"—without much reverb; slower sounds can take a bit more. Increase the reverb when atmosphere is more important than articulation. For a scene in a cave, for in-

stance, you might record footsteps from a distance to pick up lots of echo and give the audience a sense of being there. But use far less reverb with dialogue. When in doubt, record dry for clarity. You can always add reverb in playback, but once it's on the tape, you can't take it out again.

Outdoor problems are a little different. With no ceiling and few nearby walls, there's little reflected sound. This lets you work farther from your performers, but not too far. Without reflections to bolster it, sound dies away much faster outdoors. Turning up the recording level to compensate, whether by you or your recorder's automatic level control, increases the system's electrical noise. This is less of a problem with Hi-Fi or 8mm PCM recorders, however.

The key to controlling the direct-to-reflected sound ratio lies in the distance between the microphone and your subject. This is a problem for camera-mounted mics since you usually don't get the best sound from the spot that gives the best picture. The solution is to use another microphone positioned for the best sound pickup. Most cameras have built-in jacks to accommodate remote mics. If your camera doesn't have one, your VCR may.

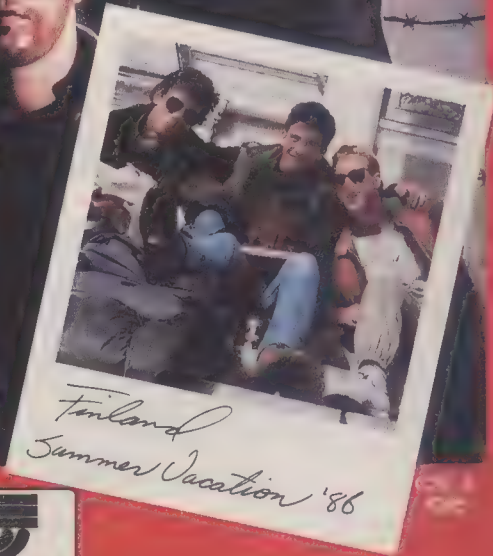
The kind of mic you should use should depend on what you want to use it for. Omnidirectional microphones, which pick up sound from all directions equally, don't have to be aimed critically. They sound a trifle smoother than other types, and are the least sensitive to wind noise. But directional microphones, which pick up more sound

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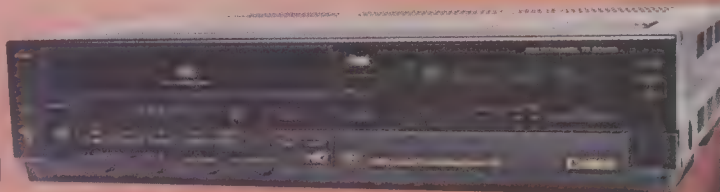
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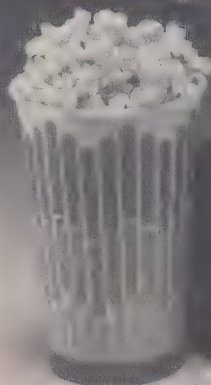
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Audio Input

from some directions than from others, can be aimed to exclude ambient noise and room reflections. This lets them be used further from the subject without picking up too much extraneous noise. In video, where microphones must often be invisible, that's especially important.

For stereo, you may want a single-point mics—a pair of directional microphones in a single housing that's simpler to set up than two separate microphones. Single-point microphones also do a good job of keeping centrally-located sounds centered between speakers, and deliver a signal that sounds good in mono too.

Two of Sony's single-point mics, the ECM-929 and the ECM-939, can be used with accessory boxes that vary the stereo spread in the signal. Within limits, you can widen the image for atmosphere or narrow it down to keep your dialogue from wandering. Don't switch perspective much within a scene, though, or the audience will be distracted by your tinkering.

Narration is duck soup to record. If it's a voice-over with the narrator off-screen, you can place a mic right in his or her hand. Better yet, put it on a stand so it won't pick up noise from the narrator's fingers. If the narrator is on-screen, you can still hand him or her the mic. Anyone who watches TV is used to seeing people talking into their fists. If the mic is hand-held, make sure it's designed for such use, with the active mic elements shock-mounted so they won't pick up the sound of the performer's fingers.

For drama, though, you won't want the microphones to show. As long as your characters don't move around much, you can probably conceal a mic or two in the setting—behind a book on a desk, for example. With an assistant, you can do it like the pros by holding the mics on booms just above the camera's view. The assistant had better be as well-rehearsed as the cast, though, so the boom will be neither too far away nor in the picture.

If you lack assistants, and the nature of the scene does not permit your actors to cluster around a single microphone, you may have to use a few mics and run them into a mixer. Mixers let you regulate how much sound from each mic goes into the final soundtrack. They also add a bit of noise, usually hiss, unless they're very good. In stereo, try to mix dialog equally into both channels to keep it tied to the screen, but use a stereo mic or mic pair, a little distance off, to pick up ambience.

Another approach, especially useful if the cast ranges far from the camera, is to use wireless microphones. These transmit to small receivers that plug into the mixer or camera. Small, reasonably

priced wireless mics are available from Azden, Ambico, Radio Shack, Sima, and a number of other companies.

Don't worry about the gear's visibility in scenes you're planning to film. Miniaturization has already taken place. The microphones themselves are usually inconspicuous lavalier types that hang around the performer's neck; some can be concealed in clothing. Rehearse before shooting, to make sure you won't pick up the noise of rustling clothes. And be careful of scenes in which two performers wearing body mics get close to one another. When this happens, both mics pick up both performers, with just enough difference in timing to create a strange-sounding comb-filter effect.

If you're shooting outdoors, use a wind screen. Most microphones come with such screens, balls of soft foam that slip over the mics. If you lack one, get one now—the day you need it will be the day all the stores are closed, out of stock, or 40 miles away.

Wind noise is always louder through a microphone than it seems to the naked ear. Without a wind screen, the slightest breeze can sound like a roaring hurricane on your sound-track. Even with a screen, you're only protected against average breezes. If you hear wind roar in your headphones even with your wind screen in place, try sheltering the microphone by having someone stand just upwind of it, or arranging your shot so a building or car can block the breeze. If that doesn't work, go inside and wait for the wind to die down.

In quiet surroundings, watch out for noise from the zoom lens motor. This usually won't be a problem unless you're using the mic on your camera. If the mic has a telescoping boom, extending it away from the lens will help. If zoom noise is still a problem, zoom manually, or pause the camera and zoom between shots.

If you have several performers, try to keep them equidistant from your mic, so one won't sound more distant than the others. A high microphone position, above the performer's heads, sometimes helps achieve this. However, if one performer is much louder than the others, put him a bit further from the mic. To make someone sound farther away than he is, place the mic at a distance.

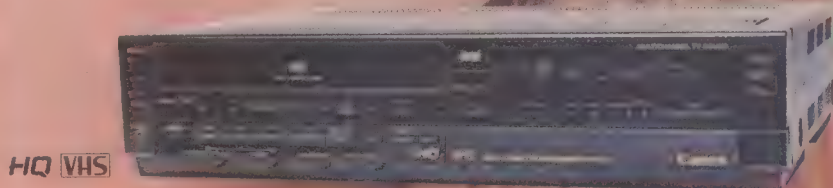
Home videos, like children of an earlier generation, were often seen but not heard. But a little planning ahead of time can make your video productions sound a lot better. While it may never be as good as a pro's, at least you won't have to constantly fiddle with the TV's volume, bass, and treble controls when showing home productions to friends. ☒

Ivan Berger is Technical Editor of Audio Magazine.

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Games

In a 1958 issue of *Mad* magazine, television's first genius, Ernie Kovacs, described the pieces for a board game of his own design, called *Gringo*. "In each box," wrote Kovacs, players could find "27 small red squares called *Enchiladoes*; 13 blue, plastic triangles called *Blue, Plastic Triangles*; 17 perforated disks, called *Roundees*; 113 yellow darts; 113 green darts; 113 white darts; 2 orange darts; 1 deck of playing cards with pictures of former mayors of Hong Kong from the Ming Dynasty to the present era and 1

large *GRINGO* board with automatic lazy susan."

If Ernie Kovacs were alive today, he'd probably add to that list: One videocassette.

And maybe another 113 darts.

Toymakers have discovered video and are betting that VCR games—games that use specially-produced videocassettes as an important part of play—will be this year's Cabbage Patch Kids.

It's an attempt not just to sell a new kind of play experience, but to attract an audience lost, at least in part, to home video. Video has cut into all sorts of traditional at-home pastimes, and VCR games are the toy industry's attempt to update the familiar board and card games.

These aren't video games. There are no shoot-'em-ups, no road races or hungry pac-guys. Most have traditional themes—trivia, sports, memory, and concentration—with a twist. One element of the game is introduced to players via video.

This type of game isn't that new. Five years ago, *The First National KidDisc*, an interactive videodisc crammed with games and activities for children, hit the market. Not long after, the first true game-on-a-disc, *Mysterydisc: Many Roads to Murder*, appeared.

Mysterydisc seemed like a natural. Several different whodunit scenarios challenged do-it-yourself sleuths. Players hopped around the disc looking for clues and listening to the suspects' testimony. But because of the small number of videodisc players in homes, the game went practically unnoticed. The fact that *Mysterydisc* was overly complicated, poorly written, and acted by what



BY TIMOTHY ONOSKO

appeared to be a cast of soap opera rejects didn't help much either.

Two years ago, however, Parker Brothers, which brought us *Monopoly*, adapted another of its perennials, *Clue*, to video. *Clue: The VCR Game*, was a surprise hit. Consisting of four decks of cards, a pad of worksheets, an instruction booklet, and a cassette featuring mystery scenarios, it became the model for a new game genre.

Parker Brothers has now been joined by Mattel, Pressman Toys, and a number of independent game companies and the battle is on. There are now enough games to form a miniature department in the largest toy stores, and enough themes to appeal to VCR owners and game fans. But how good are the games? How playable are they? Which are the hits? Which are the misses?

When we decided to survey the current crop of VCR games, we felt it was not enough to judge the games strictly on their video appeal. We looked also at the games' play qualities, and asked:

- How playable is the game? Is it easy or difficult to comprehend? Ideally, a game should take minutes to learn and a lifetime to master.

- Is it replayable? Or do you want to put it away after one experience?

- Is it well-designed? Can players easily find flaws or ways to improve it that the designers didn't think of?

- Is the video portion of the game relevant, or just a gimmick? Is the video effective and well-produced?

We enlisted the aid of several play-testers, unpacked the games, and turned the group loose. We asked them to comment on the games' strengths and weaknesses, to look for ways to improve them, and to have fun. In fairness, the group does not span the demographic spectrum. They are couples ranging in age from their mid-twenties to early-forties—the kind of people you might expect to entertain in your home. Children weren't involved since most VCR games are aimed at young adults who own or have access to a VCR (really the *Trivial Pursuit* crowd).

With this in mind, let the games begin.

FLASH MATCH

Mattel Toys, \$30. Will Shriner. Includes 162 photo cards, betting chips, instruction/solution book, and a one-hour videocassette.

FLASH MATCH, JR.

Mattel Toys, \$30. Includes 107 picture cards and one-hour cassette.

Flash Match is a memory game. Players match photographic images shown in a short, rapid sequence on television to those

they hold in a 12-card hand. Bets are placed on the correct order, and bluffing is allowed. Players retain their cards when they win (by displaying correct cards or bluffing) and lose them if they are wrong and are defeated in a challenge.

The *Flash Match* cassette is attractive, fast moving, and visually pleasant. Oddly, it is hosted by comedian Will Shriner, who, on this program, looks uncomfortable and is not entertaining. He introduces the game and appears between the short (less than a minute) game segments to remind players of rules and strategies.

Our play-testers immediately found a major flaw. Players are not penalized for failing to recognize the photo cards in their hand that are actually seen on the tape. This encourages conservative play. Risk-taking (in the form of bluffing), while supposedly an important part of the game, is discouraged.

Instructions are in a printed booklet that also includes the correct order of the images. The instructions, though, are too verbose and could have been easily outlined on the video. With 80 different sequences that cannot be memorized, we thought the game could be replayed often. But the length of one "complete game," in which all 162 cards change hands, is too long and repetitious—except for competitive, hard-core gamers and hyperactive teenagers.

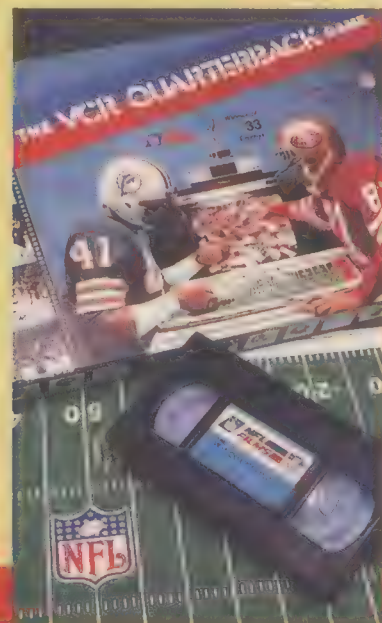
Flash Match, Jr. is a similar, much simplified game for children 6 to 12. There is no betting, bluffing, or challenging. The video is hosted by an animated "mad scientist" character, Professor Gamebrain. The images are playful and kid-oriented (bicycles, bubble gum, etc). It may, however, be too simple for older children.

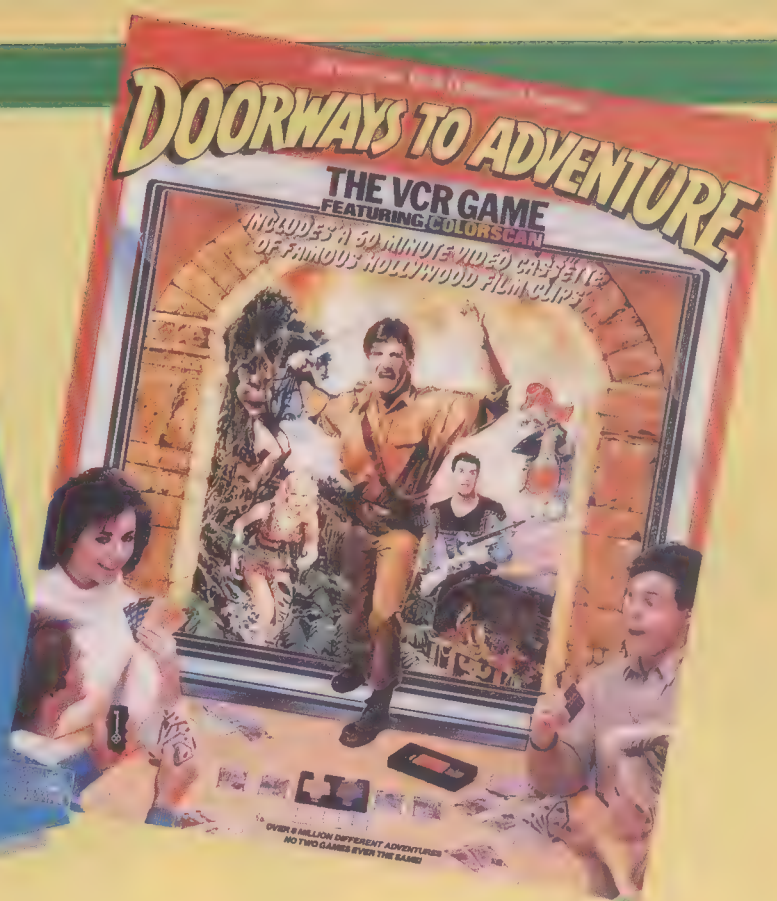
PREDICAMENTS

Mattel Toys, \$30. Joan Rivers. Includes playing board, 8 playing pieces, 108 cards, instruction booklet and a one-hour videocassette.

Predicaments is a comic soap-opera parody, but the object is to make points by playing cards during the video portion. Playing a card moves you around the board. The first player to circle it twice wins the game. Cards are played by shouting nonsensical answers printed on "who," "what," "why," "where," and "when" cards to questions posed by the actors in the video. Another type of card, marked "none of your business," is a wild card.

Predicaments should have had everything going for it. The video was obviously blessed with a big budget. Joan Rivers hosts and the comedy cast includes Arte Johnson (*Laugh-In*) and Gordon Jump (*WKRP*). Unfortunately the humor fails for the most part, save for a few well-timed comments by Johnson. Rivers is shrill, obnoxious,





ious, and serves absolutely no purpose in the game itself. The sound quality is also poor, making it difficult at times to understand.

Again, instructions for the game come via a booklet, not the video. This turns out to be a real problem. *Predicaments* doesn't know whether it's a comedy/party game, a card game, or a board game, and players don't know what's going on half the time. The instructions are long and complicated and the game itself is boring. Strategy is never clear, and the many rules provide most of the (unintentional) humor.

As for replayability, well, frankly, we couldn't determine that. Our play-testers threatened a walkout and forced us to put the game away after a single round. One suggested another kind of card in addition to the "none of your business" pasteboards: "I just don't care" cards. One asked to borrow the cassette—in order to erase it and record *The Tonight Show*. *Predicaments* is a loser and is definitely not for the kiddies, either.

DOORWAYS TO ADVENTURE

Pressman Toys, \$40. Includes "treasure" cards, "power" cards, "bid" cards, playing pieces, die, play money, and a one-hour videocassette.

DOORWAYS TO HORROR

Pressman Toys, \$40. Includes "monster identity" cards, playing cards, die, play money, chips, and a one-hour videocassette.

Both *Doorways* games are cast in the adventure/role-playing mold, though neither are as complex as, say, *Dungeons and Dragons*. In *Doorways to Adventure*, the object is to accumulate as much treasure as possible. Casting spells to win gold while maintaining your mythical "strength" is the object of *Doorways to Horror*. Game play involves drawing and exchanging cards and play money.

Both games use a randomizing technique that employs a color-coded die and segments on the videocassette. The die is rolled and the tape is scanned to a screen with the right color. This is the

only use of randomization—an important element in all gaming—that we saw in any of the game videos. The video substitutes for a deck of cards in a traditional game. That is, instead of drawing a card at random, you watch a video segment.

The cassettes themselves are assembled from clips of less than a minute each from old films and TV shows. These clips, however, are only used as a backdrop for information relevant to the games; the actual material in the clips is unimportant. We found footage from *Cyrano De Bergerac* with Jose Ferrer, *Africa Screams* with Abbott and Costello, *Algiers* with Charles Boyer, and *The Terror*, featuring Jack Nicholson in an early screen role. *Adventure* also contains some TV clips, notably Ernie Kovacs wandering through an art gallery and Richard Greene as Robin Hood. Though *Horror* tries to stick with old (and very low-budget) monster flicks, its designers had the guts to throw in a clip from a Popeye cartoon and still tie it to the theme.

The play-testers liked the so-called "Colorscan" randomizing technique, although the slow speed of the visual search feature on my VCR meant more waiting time than we would have liked. The colors on the TV screen and the die are, fortunately, also identified by initials—P for purple, B for blue, Y for yellow and so on. Not only does this mean the game can be played on a black & white TV, but it came in handy when we discovered one of our play-testers was colorblind!

The testers also liked that the time limit on a complete game was dictated by the length of the tape. Complete games can last less than an hour. What we found unusual was the resemblance to a TV game show the playing atmosphere took on. The segments in both videos seem like those "what's behind door number three, Johnny?" bits on morning TV.

Without a scan or a visual search feature on your VCR, you really can't comfortably play either *Doorways* game. Although Pressman says that you can make note of counter numbers where the segments start, this is more of a bother than it's worth. There isn't any obstacle to repeated playing.

EYEWITNESS NEWSREEL CHALLENGE

Parker Brothers, \$40. Includes a cribbage-style playing board, 3 game pieces, 2 writing pads, instructions, and a two-hour videocassette.

Eyewitness is an observation and memory game based on old newsreel footage. While watching a segment, two players or two teams think up questions based on the details in the newsreel clips. They ask these to one another after the segment finishes. Answers can be challenged, and disputes are settled by reviewing the tape. The object is to move a marker down a cribbage-like playing board. Scoring is simple.

The *Eyewitness* newsreel cassette has been assembled from black & white footage of various ages, most of it from the 1920s and 1930s. In addition to newsreels, there is a liberal sprinkling of silent movie footage, as well. There is no host but the 106 clips are narrated. The cassette, by itself, has some entertainment and information value.

There is nothing outstandingly wrong with *Eyewitness*, yet one play-tester cried "Ripoff!" "I can do the same thing by recording the evening news if I wanted to," he said, and he was right. *Eyewitness* proves that you can make a game out of anything, like counting red cars on the freeway.

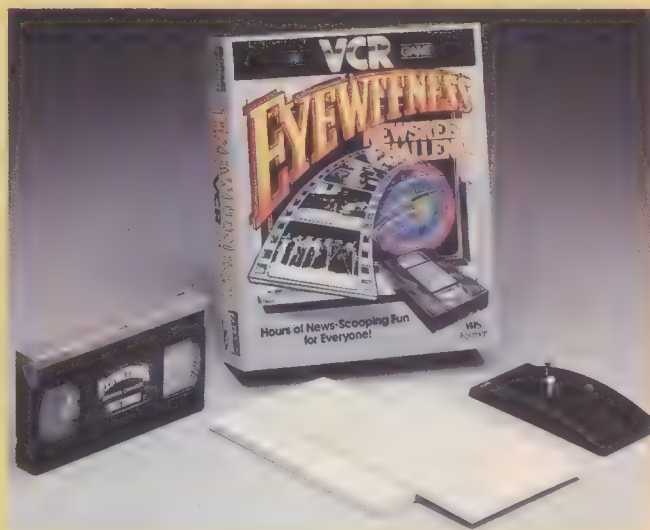
Thankfully, though, the instructions (few as they may be) are given to the players right on the cassette. As for replays, the narrator stresses that the game can be played again and again. This depends, naturally, on how familiar you become with the material.

CLUE: THE VCR GAME

Parker Brothers, \$40. Includes detective notepads, 112 cards, an instruction/solution booklet, a solution decoder, and a one-hour videocassette.

Clue: The VCR Game is not the same game as the *Clue* board game, though Parker Brothers likes to say it retains the spirit and flavor of the original. In this version, players watch a scenario, looking for visual clues. From these, as well as clues printed on the cards, they determine a number (one to five) of murderers, victims, rooms, and weapons. There is also an added element in the game—discovering the secret identities each player assumes.

In addition to the original *Clue* characters—Miss Scarlet, Colonel Mustard, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Mr. Green, and Mrs. Peacock—there are several new cast members: Sgt. Gray, the police inspector, Miss Peach (an obvious play on the comic strip character), Madame Rose, the supposed sister of Mr. Boddy (the victim in the original board game), and Monsieur Brunette, her



French lawyer. A butler, Didit, is the host of the game. He is never either a murderer or a victim.

The production values are low, but adequate. Ham acting is kept to a minimum, though all of it is of "little theater" quality. There are three scenarios consisting of five short sequences. The three card decks have six individual sets of facts on them, so a total of eighteen different games can cleverly be squeezed out of the limited video material. Nonetheless, we questioned how fresh the material would be after, say, six games. Previous players, of course, have an unfair advantage.

Still, this game kept our play-testers interested the longest. In fact, Parker Brothers is right. It is enough like the *Clue* board game to satisfy amateur sleuths. "I'd buy this game for my mother," said one of the testers, "she reads six mysteries a week. Unfortunately, she doesn't own a VCR or watch television, either." Another invited herself back the next night for a second round.

If VCR games need a model, it should be *Clue*. It is well thought-out and challenging, yet it remains accessible and never seems impossible. The video is straightforward, with enough humor to keep the game light. Still, there are a few too many groaners among the jokes. While the game is slightly complex, the instructions are outlined on both the cassette and in print. Best of all is a short introductory game and a walkthrough by the butler.

The only real drawback is that you have to note the VCR's counter numbers when sequences start and end so that a scene can be reviewed. This is a hassle that wouldn't exist if this were a videodisc. More than any other VCR game, though, *Clue* works both as a game and a video.

COMMERCIAL CRAZIES

Mattel Toys, \$30. Includes game board, 212 cards, 16 playing pieces and an approximately 45-minute videocassette.

Commercial Crazies is a memory and observation game in which players ask each other trivia questions about commercials—that's right, TV ads. Points are scored by answering the questions correctly and by bluffing other players into a wrong answer. Points correspond to the number of moves allowed on a small, nine square playing board. The object of the board game is to capture a playing piece of each color, and contestants can steal these from one another.

The idea of watching commercials sounds, admittedly, stupid and boring. But the forty 30-second spots are the work of Chica-

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BY
MARTIN
PORTER



VIDEO'S FOURTH

*Surround Sound Systems
Unleash TV Audio*



There's a sure-fire way to enlarge the size of any TV without stretching the tube an inch. Just plug the box into your stereo, turn up the juice, and watch it appear to grow. It's no secret that sound works wonders for video. But now you can take the experience one step farther—into space. How?

Surround sound is the latest innovation in the evolution of quality audio/video. It refers to systems that try to recreate listening experiences with a front stereo spread augmented by additional rear sound channels. Audio comes from all corners. But when coupled with video, the television takes on grand proportions.

There is a wide selection of surround sound devices to choose from. Some come in the form of add-on boxes, while others come aboard AM/FM receivers. There are also an assortment of surround settings to choose from, plus you may have to add a second power amp and rear speakers to your usual stereo/video system to really experience surround.

Sounds like a runaway hit? Not so fast. This was also the logic behind quadraphony, or quad, which died an embarrassing death 10 years ago in an audio-only incarnation. Are today's surround buyers going to face the same lonely obsolescence quad owners experienced when their investments made them proud owners of the audio equivalent of the Edsel? It's possible,

but a lot less likely. Quad slipped from sight, in part because consumers never understood what it was about. Indicative of quad's problems was that no one could agree on its spelling: *The New York Times*, *Business Week*, *Popular Science* all had their own style. With three different systems to choose from, problems with equipment quality, and extra expenses that could easily double the cost of an average hi-fi, consumers, and even manufacturers, were overwhelmed and confused.

The CD-4 system from JVC and RCA sent four different channels to appropriate speakers, but the discs were expensive and difficult to produce. The SQ format from CBS and Sony produced the quad effect by "piggybacking" two additional signals on the ordinary stereo pair. Its sound was often characterized by an annoying pumping effect. A third format, QS from Sansui, sold widely in Japan but was unable to tread water here.

QUID PRO QUAD

Consumers didn't bite then—and it's fair to ask whether they will for surround systems that attempt to do for video what quad did for audio. But surround has more going for it. For one thing, it's cheaper. In 1974, *Consumer Reports* estimated it cost at least \$500 to upgrade a stereo to quad. Today, you can surround yourself for less than \$300. Though surround requires ei-

ther a stereo or Hi-Fi VCR to start, inexpensive rear speakers will do the job. (Dolby Surround has a 100 Hertz to 7 kiloHertz bandwidth restriction, so you don't even need speakers that can handle the full range from 20 Hz to 20 kHz.)

Unlike quad, there's also a de facto standard. Most surround sound decoders offer Dolby Surround, a specific matrix that creates an impressive surround effect. Perhaps best of all, there's already a good supply of tapes and discs. Quad hardware was introduced before quad recordings were plentiful. But Dolby Stereo-encoded software (containing the surround information) has been cranked out for many years unbeknownst to consumers. There are now over 800 home video releases available in Dolby Surround, and more on the way.

If surround home video is successful, Dolby will be the reason. Although other surround products are on the market, most of them at least offer the Dolby setting as one of several surround or ambient sound options. A few use competing systems that virtually do the same thing.

Dolby Surround evolved from Dolby's success in selling the movie industry on the idea of providing serious sound with its productions. Supported by Hollywood heavyweights like Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, movie houses began adding a surround effect to their sound systems

DIMENSION

NEC AV-300E surround-sound amplifier with Dolby, matrix, and hall modes



Toshiba Black-stripe monitor/receiver and **Shure AVC20** surround-sound decoder with (top) **Infinity VRS** speakers and (bottom) **Bose 4.2** speakers

for the new multi-track 70mm blockbusters they were seeing. When home video took off, the films were transferred to videotape, with the surround information sent along for the ride.

Dolby engineers had designed circuits for a home video surround sound device as early as 1981. But their value did not become apparent until 1983.

The success of the first surround devices from Surround Sound, Inc. (SSI) that year proved consumers were starting to look for extra dimension in the home video experience. The idea began to register that, when combined with a picture, something like quad could work after all.

The way Dolby vice president Ian Hardcastle sees it, people are forward-looking creatures. We go through life concentrating on what is ahead of us while remaining aware of other sounds around and behind us. Dolby Surround is designed similarly with the important audio information up front with the picture. The surround channel adds ambience, atmosphere and occasional effects that enhance the viewing realism.

This is accomplished by four sound sources carried on the ordinary left and right channels. In addition to the standard stereo signals, there is a center channel, and a surround channel for rear speakers. The decoder interprets the signals and ships the appropriate information to the

intended speaker. A fifth subwoofer may also be used.

Many Dolby decoders don't process the center channel since the left and right signals are usually enough to provide a so-called phantom center channel, while the rear speakers carry the encoded delay and ambient information. As a result, recordings seem to place sounds at coordinates in space, some well beyond the usual stereo spread.

SURROUND YOURSELF

Some 45 products, worldwide, offer Dolby Surround. They range from complete packages that include the necessary decoder, amplifier, and rear speakers to stand-alone decoders that require additional power and speakers.

The Marantz AVS351, for example, is one of the more economical ways to get into the surround sound game. It includes a surround sound decoder with Dolby Surround and one other spatial setting, a 20-watt-per-channel amplifier, and a pair of rear speakers—all for under \$300. Meanwhile, Pioneer's VSX-5000, for about \$570, is a powerful 100-watt-per-channel AM/FM receiver with a separate 70-watt surround amplifier complemented by four surround modes (including Dolby), three video inputs, and a wireless remote control.

Simulated stereo for mono sources is an

additional feature for units like SSI's SSI-360II, which also carries a 45-watt-per-channel amp. It costs about \$390. Some systems like Technics' SH-AV44, for about \$320, also process the center signal and use a "bass boost" switch to enhance the low-frequency performance of the main speakers at low volumes. A subwoofer output is a coming decoder attraction for which Yamaha has introduced a shielded, self-powered "superwoofer" speaker, the NS-W2, for \$249.

Variable delay functions are also a rage. This feature lets you tweak the delay effect to your satisfaction. In most cases, the delay control varies from 10 to 30 milliseconds, though some units have a wider range than others. Sony's SDP-505ES, for example, provides separate left and right channel delay control in 0.1 millisecond increments for time intervals between 0 and 90 milliseconds; its Dolby mode is adjustable from 10 to 30 milliseconds. Since sound travels at approximately 1 foot per millisecond, the 30 millisecond range should only be used for exceptionally large rooms. Fixed Dolby delays are usually set at around 20 milliseconds, about what the average-sized living room would need.

Look also for an input balance control. In fact, before viewing a tape the first time, it pays to switch off the surround power amplifier and adjust this input balance so the sound seems to come from between the front speakers. Many decoders provide meters or indicator lights to help you do this.

Some Dolby Surround units are simply made better. Several companies add extra logic circuitry that further emphasizes the left, right, surround, and center separation. Called "directional" or "signal" enhancement, it works on all channels and separates them better. Left signals become more left, right signals become more right, and so on.

The feature is most important in a large room with a large-screen TV, or if you are watching the TV from way off center. In fact, Dolby emphasizes this feature in its movie environments where people are seated all over the theater. Several companies have made a point of recreating this theatrical signal enhancement at home.

Shure Brothers, in particular, has gone all out to build the ultimate surround processor. Its HTS-5000, for about \$600, decodes Dolby Surround and synthesizes stereo from mono sources. It provides a subwoofer, a center channel, synthesized left and right rear channels, and, most importantly, directional circuitry similar to what Dolby uses in its movie theatres.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Such directionality is expensive, which is why the HTS-5000 and the Fosgate 3601, another decoder with high-quality signal directionality, cost more than others. However, engineers are working to reduce these boards to an inexpensive chip. When this happens, the day of the



▲ **Sansui S-XV1000 audio/video control center with 'CinemaSurround'**

Yamaha DSP-1 digital sound field processor with Dolby Surround ▼



mass-market surround sound decoder may be upon us.

For the time being, though, Dolby Surround is likely to remain a secondary video sound source (most programming is still mono, stereo or Hi Fi), which is why many companies pack their decoders with other surround effects. In most cases these are simply glorified delay circuits that give a spatial sensation to the tape, though Yamaha's new digital sound processor, the DSP-1, can recreate the ambience of world-famous concert halls.

Still, surround effects are growing. Aiwa's SFC-1 surround system, for about \$200, comes with a 10-watt-per-channel amp and hall, theatre, stadium and arena surround modes. The NEC AVD-700 pre-amp comes with a "creation feature" that lets users design their own surround effect. Sony's SDP-505ES has five ambience modes in addition to Dolby and is being touted as the first fully digital surround processor of its type. Meanwhile, Yamaha's DSP-1 has been programmed with 48 variable acoustic environments ranging from a cathedral to a jazz club in addition to Dolby surround. It costs about \$850.

In this sense, the Fosgate 3601 is particularly effective. In addition to Dolby signal enhancement, the add-on has a so-called Panorama Effect which creates a "spatially correct" audio horseshoe around the lis-

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Dolby Surround is designed with the important audio information up front with the picture. The surround channel adds ambience and atmosphere to enhance realism.



▲ **Canon SP-10 audio/video control center with surround sound**

SURROUND SOUND GUIDE

Surround sound devices vary widely in features and price. Here's a look at what's available.

Aiwa SFC-1. Surround system with rear channel 10-watt-per-channel amplifier, simulated stereo, and hall, theatre, stadium and arena modes. Price: \$200.

Akai AS-P302. Surround-sound processor with mute, remote control, input switching, AM/FM select, Dolby/matrix surround with 3 memory presets, and 25-w/ch. amp. Price: \$300.

Canon SP-10. Audio/video control center with surround sound, TV/video out; 2 stereo VCR (tape deck) inputs, 1 audio input, and two-way dubbing. Price: \$369.

Denon AVC-500II. A/V control center with Dolby surround-sound circuit, simulated stereo, 20-w/ch. amp., graphic equalizer, and two-way dubbing. Price: \$380.

Fosgate 3600. 360-degree Space Matrix (TM) surround decoder, 254-w/ch., Dolby Surround, 5-position power switch; and panoramic, ambience, and mono enhancement. Price: \$399.95.

Fosgate 3601. Dolby decoder with panoramic, ambience, and center channel enhancement; adjustable sensitivity, bass equalizer, 40-w/ch. amp, and

optional wired remote. Price: \$549.

Kenwood SC75. Surround-sound processor with Dolby, theater, and stadium modes; adjustable delay, and 5-w/ch. amplifier. Cost: not available.

Marantz AVS351. Surround-sound decoder with 2 rear speakers; variable delay; 20-w/ch. amp.; and Dolby, matrix, and spatial modes. Price: \$299.95.

NEC AV-300E. Surround-sound amplifier with Dolby, matrix, hall modes; 4 or 2 channel operation (30 or 60-w/ch.), and full remote control. Price: \$499.

NEC AV-350. Surround-sound amp.; Dolby, matrix, hall modes; 4 or 2 channel operation (30/60-w/ch.), rear channel digital delay, and full remote control. Price: \$549.

NEC AVD-700. Surround-sound pre-amp processor, and A/V mixer; variable digital delay; Dolby, hall and matrix, and "Creation" (user designs effect) modes; 5 audio connections, 5 A/V inputs, remote. Price: \$699.

NEC A-1300. Surround-sound integrated amp. with Dolby and matrix modes, 2/4 channel operation (130/50-w/ch.); 7 audio connections, and unified remote control. Price: \$699.

Pioneer VSX-4000. A/V digital re-

ceiver with surround, 60-w/ch., 3 video inputs with stereo audio, 2-way video dub, video enhancing with split screen, quartz-PLL AM/FM tuner, simulated stereo, and acoustic tone memory. Price: \$429.95.

Pioneer VSX-5000. A/V digital receiver w/surround sound; 100-w/ch. continuous, 70-w/ch. surround; 3 video inputs, stereo audio, remote control, video enhancer with split screen, 2 RF/4 audio inputs, 2-way video dub, 4-mode surround (incl. Dolby), and acoustic tone memory. Price: \$569.95.

Rhoades TA-1001. Omni-plexer rear channel decoder/amplifier; adjustable L-R controls; 1 set input/outputs. Price: \$170.

Sansui AV-C10. A/V selector/dubbing control center with 15-w/ch. stereo amp. and 5-band equalizer; Cinema-Surround (TM) with theater and hall modes, simulated stereo, 3 VCR inputs with full dubbing, video and RF out and simulcast/audio dubbing. Price: \$320.

Sansui DS-77. CinemaSurround (TM) processor, 10-w/ch. amp. for rear speakers, 4 or 2 channel output; "QS Stereo," theater, and hall modes; simulated stereo, and bass enhancement. Price: \$400.

continued on page 150

**Hardboiled Movies
Stage A Dramatic
Comeback**



**A
TOUCH
OF NOIR**

BY ALAN PRENDERGAST

“f

orget it, Jake...”

Private eye Jake Gittes stares in disbelief at the body of his client, Evelyn Mulwray, a victim of circumstance, police ineptitude, and her own tragic past. Walsh, Jake’s assistant, puts a hand on his boss’ shoulder and utters one of the most memorable last lines in all of moviedom: “Forget it, Jake. It’s Chinatown.”

The movie, of course, is *Chinatown* (1974), a brooding, cynical tale of corruption and murder in Los Angeles, ca. 1937. Director Roman Polanski and writer Robert Towne present Chinatown not only as a setting but as a state of mind, a netherworld of futility and despair. At one point Jake, played by Jack Nicholson, warns Evelyn (Faye Dunaway) that Chinatown is “bad luck.” “You can’t always tell what’s going on there,” he says. “I was trying to keep someone from being hurt and I ended up making sure that she was hurt.”

For all its mystery and danger, Polanski’s *Chinatown* is merely a province of the larger, darker world of film noir—a back-street world inhabited by hardboiled gumshoes and vengeful gun molls, ex-cons who can’t shake their past and fall guys with no future, giggling psychos, crooked cops, and the occasional femme fatale.

The term film noir (“black film”) was coined by French critics to describe a distinctive breed of American crime thriller that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s. Long before most Americans regarded their own popular cinema as “art,” the French saw that movies such as *This Gun for Hire* (1942), *Double Indemnity* (1944), *The Big Sleep* (1946), and *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950) were radically different from the predictable, moralistic gangster epics of the 1930s. Indeed, with their characteristic dark mood, expressionistic lighting, and pessimistic themes, the films were downright subversive.

Although the term is now widely used, film scholars don’t entirely agree on what constitutes a true work of noir. Purists contend that the genre encompasses only a few dozen classic titles of the 1940s. Others take a longer view, seeing a continuity of themes and characters from *The*

Maltese Falcon (1941) to *Touch of Evil* (1958) and beyond. One filmography lists more than 300 titles, including several “B” melodramas of the 1950s.

The rich traditions of the genre continue to influence Hollywood’s output today. In the past decade or so, moviegoers have seen a gradual revival of the noir sensibility: period pieces such as *Chinatown* and *True Confessions*; new versions of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *Farewell, My Lovely*, *The Big Sleep*, the Robert Mitchum-Jane Greer mystery *Out of the Past* (remade with Jeff Bridges and Rachel Ward as *Against All Odds*); and contemporary thrillers with a heart of darkness, including *The Conversation*, *Night Moves*, *Taxi Driver*, *Body Heat*, and *Blood Simple*. These films have, in turn, stirred new interest in the black & white classics that inspired them.

Collecting film noir on video can be a rewarding and frustrating experience. While most of the modern efforts are readily available on tape or disc, many important works from the 1940s and ‘50s have yet to surface in the viced market. Films starring noir icons like Humphrey Bogart aren’t hard to find, but a significant number of worthy titles featuring lesser stars have all but disappeared. Their circulation is confined to the late, late show on local television stations—complete with scratchy soundtrack, brutal editing, and endless car commercials.

But don’t give up hope. The major studios are beginning to recognize that there is a collectors’ market for vintage noir. For example, MGM, which brought out *The Asphalt Jungle* on cassette a few months ago, now has “definite” plans to release the original version of *The Postman Always Rings Twice* next year, according to a

spokesman. Meanwhile, premium cable channels are slipping pristine prints of *The Big Heat* and other old-timers into their programming, in an effort to add variety to the usual lineup of slashers, aliens, and adolescent lust.

The hardboiled revival presents an opportunity for a new generation of viewers to discover a type of movie as uniquely American as the western. Noir gave many prominent Hollywood figures their start, including Kirk Douglas, Burt Lancaster, Richard Widmark, and directors John Huston and Stanley Kubrick. Alfred Hitchcock, Orson Welles, Fritz Lang, Billy Wilder, and many others tailored the genre to fit their own artistic visions, developing techniques that are still widely imitated today.

For the younger video buff, raised on TV police dramas and Dirty Harry movies, there is much that is familiar about film noir. Certain elements, though, may seem utterly, refreshingly strange: the stark atmosphere, quirky characters, smoldering passion, snappy tough-guy dialogue, unexpected plot twists... Like the man says, you can't always tell what's going on there.

ORIGINAL SINS

"I'd be innocent officially, but that's a big word—innocent. Stupid's more like it. Well, everybody is somebody's fool. The only way to stay out of trouble is to grow old.... Maybe I'll live so long that I'll forget her. Maybe I'll die trying," muses Michael O'Hara, played by Orson Welles, in *The Lady From Shanghai*.

How can one tell if a movie is genuine noir? The presence of a voice-over narration, usually by the fatalistic hero himself, is one clue. A high percentage of night scenes in smoky bars, deserted streets, and dingy hallways is another. Other trademarks include nightmarish camera angles, uncomfortably close closeups, and a penchant for spiral staircases, mirrors, and ominous shadows—a visual style reminiscent of German Expressionist cinema of the silent era.

Yet not every work of noir has a narrator or takes place at night. More important than the film's look is its script. The pioneers of film noir turned for their material to the popular murder mysteries of Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, W. R. Burnett, and other writers of the hardboiled school of literature. Just as these authors took murder out of the parlor and put it back in the gutter where it belonged, the Hollywood adaptations of their work cast off the polite conventions of the old-fashioned whodunit in favor of a tougher, messier, ultimately more disturbing kind of mystery. Virtually every significant contribution to the genre is concerned, to some degree, with the themes of greed, corruption, and sexual obsession. Or, as the above quote from *The Lady From Shanghai* suggests: nobody is innocent, the world is full of trouble waiting to happen, and "everybody is somebody's fool."

John Huston's *The Maltese Falcon*—the third film based on Hammett's novel but the first that was largely faithful to the book—set the trend. Bogart's Sam Spade is no armchair detective; he's a streetwise, bare-knuckled loner who weaves his weary way through a seamy cityscape of perverse, often lethal characters. Dick Powell



covered similar ground as Philip Marlowe in *Murder My Sweet* (based on Chandler's *Farewell, My Lovely*); Bogart later donned Marlowe's trenchcoat himself in Howard Hawks' rendition of *The Big Sleep*.

The arrival of Spade and Marlowe marked the first stirrings of noir, but there is an element of cartoonlike comedy in these films, particularly in *The Maltese Falcon*, which later filmmakers tended to shun. The aloof, principled private eye who solves the crime and keeps his hands clean was soon replaced by more vulnerable types of heroes. In *Laura*, the detective played by Dana Andrews falls in love with the portrait of the woman (Gene Tierney) whose murder he is investigating, an emotion which taints his work. In *Out of the Past*, private eye Robert Mitchum is so compromised by the femme fatale (Jane Greer) that he can only escape her clutches by driving them both into a hail of bullets.

Many noir films dispense with the maverick detective entirely, focusing instead on a type of character who was both killer and victim—Raven (Alan Ladd), the frozen-faced hired gun in *This Gun for Hire*, for example, or Walter Neff (Fred MacMurray), the scheming, fast-talking insurance salesman in *Double Indemnity*.

DOUBLE OR NOTHING

Double Indemnity was a landmark work, combining the talents of director Billy Wilder, Raymond Chandler (who coauthored the screenplay with Wilder, based on James Cain's novel), the deadpan MacMurray, and Barbara Stanwyck, in one of her most seductive and predatory roles. Its basic story line—a weak-willed man is drawn into a web of intrigue and murder by his own greed, the love of a bad woman, or both—was played out time and again in many later films. It happened to Edward G. Robinson in two 1945 releases directed by Fritz Lang, *Scarlet Street* and *The Woman in the Window*; to Glenn Ford in *Gilda* (1946); to Kirk Douglas in *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946); to Orson Welles in *The Lady From Shanghai* (1948).

Given the brisk pace of double and triple crosses in the average film noir, one is never quite sure how the story is going to turn out (a welcome change, many viewers would probably agree, from most of Hollywood's present fare). Happy endings are rare. In fact, sometimes the moral ambiguities loom so large that one ends up siding with the presumed villain of the story. In *Sorry, Wrong Number*, we may initially feel some sympathy for the terrorized invalid (Barbara Stanwyck), but she is soon shown to be such a neurotic, spoiled, manipulative creature that it is possible to cheer on the henpecked husband (Burt Lancaster) plotting to kill her.

The entire genre has a curious affinity for psychopaths, career hoodlums, and startling acts of violence. Some of noir's most celebrated scenes are moments of pure evil: Richard Widmark, making his film debut as a cheap punk who cheerfully pushes a wheelchair-bound Mildred Dunnock down a flight of stairs in *Kiss of Death*; Lee Marvin and Gloria Grahame disfiguring each other with hot coffee in *The Big Heat*; the grandly deluded Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson) making her famous descent of the staircase after

shooting her lover at the end of *Sunset Boulevard*. In extreme cases, the killer can be the sole attraction: Richard Basehart's moody, trigger-happy thug ("Want to see my army discharge?" Blam!) is about the only character of note in *He Walked by Night*, a poorly-lit police docudrama that served as the model for the TV series *Dragnet*.

Their fascination with crime, brutality, and madness is no mere quirk. It is part of the larger noir vision, in which the entire system is corrupt, from top to bottom, and only the characters on the fringes of society can dare to dream of taking independent action. The battleground could be the boxing arena, as in Robert Rossen's *Body and Soul*; the tabloid press, as in Fritz Lang's *The Blue Gardenia* and *While the City Sleeps*; or some stifling urban underworld of petty hoods, as in *The Asphalt Jungle*. In any case, the noir universe is ruled by Murphy's Law: whatever can go wrong, does.

Regardless of the outcome of any individual struggle, the world remains a dangerous place, as Frank Bigelow learns in *D.O.A.* A harmless CPA from the sticks, Bigelow (Edmond O'Brien) goes to San Francisco for a vacation and winds up getting poisoned. There's no antidote to the poison, so Bigelow spends his last hours on earth trying to find out who killed him and why.

The poor slob should have stayed out of Chinatown.

NOIR TO ETERNITY

The heyday of film noir was brief. By the early 1950s the genre was repeating itself, and many of its top talents had moved on to other challenges. A proliferation of crime dramas on television probably contributed to its demise. Only a few hardy, hardboiled directors, including Fritz Lang, Sam Fuller, Don Siegel, and the unlikely Orson Welles (whose *Touch of Evil* has been called "the greatest B movie of all time"), continued to turn out first-rate noir for a few more years before succumbing to the general trend.



Jack Nicholson and Faye Dunaway in Roman Polanski's *'Chinatown'*

The genre has an affinity for psychos, hoodlums, and startling violence. Often the killer can be the sole attraction.

It now appears, though, that the death of noir was greatly exaggerated. The post-Watergate, post-Vietnam seventies saw the rise of a new "dark mood" in moviemaking, not unlike that of the Cold War era, with *Chinatown* leading the way.

A flood of remakes of 1940s classics followed. Many are little more than exercises in nostalgia; sometimes, as in *Against All Odds*, the grimness of the original ending was softened to make the film more palatable to today's audiences. However, a few films have managed to be faithful to the spirit of noir while presenting characters and situations that are disturbingly modern: Gene Hackman's lonely wiretapper in *The Conversation* and Freudian private eye in *Night Moves*, for example, or Robert DeNiro's unforgettable portrait of urban alienation in *Taxi Driver*.

More explicit in their sex and violence, latter-day noir thrillers feature other innovations as well. The boldest practically reinvent the genre. In 1981's *Thief*, director Michael Mann weaved splashy neon-lit night scenes and a throbbing synthesizer soundtrack by Tangerine Dream into a typically noirish story of a tough safecracker caught between the Mob and corrupt cops. (As executive producer of *Miami Vice*, Mann later brought the same sort of hard-edged look and sound to the television crime series.) *Blood Simple* (1984) demonstrates that it is possible to turn the old noir triangle of adultery, murder, and blackmail into an edge-of-the-seat entertainment that can hold its own with recent horror movies.

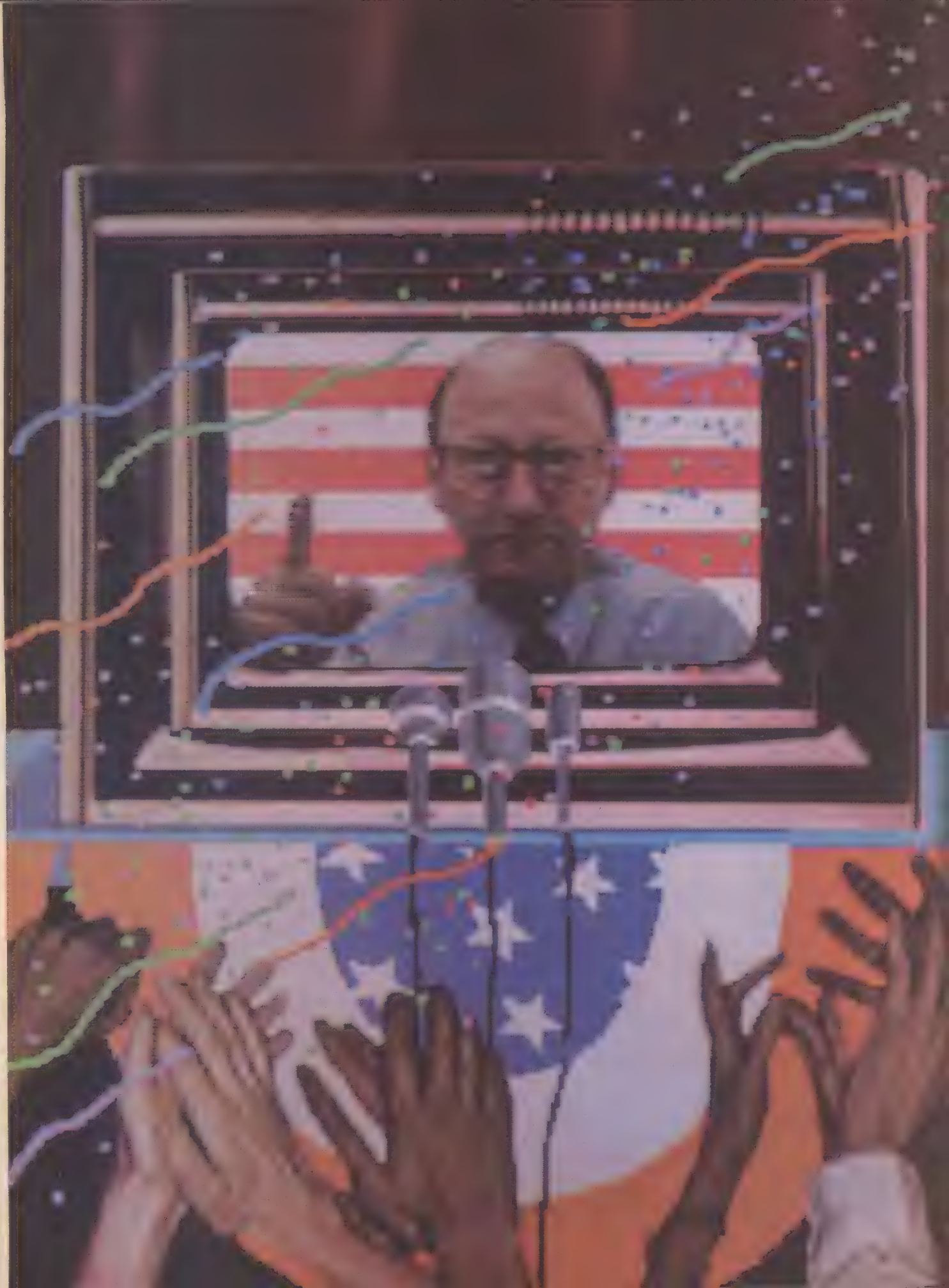
At this writing, many basic ingredients to a serious noir collection—notably *Double Indemnity*, *Nightmare Alley*, *Kiss of Death*, *The Killing*, *Gun Crazy*, *Pickup on South Street*, *Touch of Evil*, and *Kiss Me Deadly*—are not yet available on video. But with new releases trickling into the stores every week, and fresh interpretations of the genre constantly being churned out by the "new" Hollywood (where all that's old is perpetually new again), the noir connoisseur has little to worry about.

If things get slow, you can always rent a copy of *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*, a spoof of the genre, starring Alan Ladd, Humphrey Bogart, Barbara Stanwyck—and Steve Martin. Film doesn't get any darker than that.

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William Hurt and Kathleen Turner in Lawrence Kasdan's *'Body Heat'*



STUMPING WITH VIDEO

Pre-Recorded Candidates Hit The Campaign Trail

The tape begins. Uplifting music accompanies lush scenes of Americana—Niagara Falls, fertile wheat fields blowing under blue skies, the Statue of Liberty, wild horses running, snow-capped Rockies, a rocket's red glare. A new Coca Cola spot? Another Lee Iacocca promotion? Not exactly—there's Dutch Reagan, surrounded by his family behind a podium at Los Angeles' Century Plaza Hotel on election night 1984, waving and smiling, thanking the voters for this landslide victory.

From there the eight-minute videotape dissolves quickly to the message for 1986: "The people are in charge," proclaims Republican National Committee chairman Frank Fahrenkopf. "We've witnessed the greatest political realignment in history." He continues on about the necessity of recruiting and maintaining those same voters who delivered the Reagan mandate in 1984. From there it's back to idyllic scenery, sparkling graphics, glowing testimonials ("We're back on top") and hard sell. "We've got to develop county party organizations, build grassroots support." Quick shots of smiling kids, sunny weddings, the Olympics, small town parades and, finally, the Stars and Stripes, crisply flapping. Back to the Gipper. "You'll forgive me, I'm going to do it one more time," grins the President. "You ain't seen nothin' yet."

The tube fades to black, and simple credits roll: "Produced by the Republican National Committee." This mid-term election follow-up tape is the wave of the future in video politicking: smartly produced image-builders aimed at the hearts, minds, spirits, and wallets of the committed and not-yet-committed voters across the country. Today, in many campaigns, 10 to 15 minute videos are becoming a commonplace tool to attract volunteers, voters, and cash.

In 1984, a cabal of blue-blood ad agency honchos calling itself the Tuesday Team put together an 18-minute convention film for Reagan. That piece of rah-rah Republicanism was eventually expanded to a half-hour and shown by state organizations to keep spirits (and coffers) high prior to the November election. Although not the first short-form video produced to bring a candidate closer to the constituents (consultant David Garth did one for presidential candidate John Anderson in 1980), Reagan's 18-minute salute to himself got more attention and airplay than any previous.

Video has become a much bigger player in campaign strategy during the Reagan era. More efficient and cheaper cameras, tape, and editors allow television ads to be produced overnight instead of weeks or months in advance. Outside the expensive realm of television time, campaigns today are on the cusp of

home video politics parties, showing a candidate's customized message to an assembled audience of, say, retired auto workers. While not a mainstay of all campaigns this year, by the 1988 and 1990 elections it won't be unusual to find campaign volunteers distributing free tapes of their candidates outside retail video stores across the land. Door-knockers, long a vote-getting staple, will soon be armed, Fuller Brush style, with tapes they hope to show you on the family VCR, "if you've got just 10 minutes, ma'am." Like the President says, you ain't seen nothin' yet.

HEY BIG SPENDER

Perhaps the most outlandish expenditure and production—considering the scale of the race—to date was in a primary effort in Boston this spring. In a 10-person field (topped by Joseph P. Kennedy III and a Roosevelt relative) vying to replace House Speaker Tip O'Neill, state representative Tom Valley found himself looking for a way to stand out in the crowd. So when he was invited to Hanoi in the summer of 1985 as a visiting veteran he took along filmmaker Bestor Cram, not exactly sure what the results might be. He wound up with a 15-minute videotape that became Valley's primary campaign tool, though hardly a traditional cradle-to-statehouse biography. It instead showed him jogging along crowded Hanoi streets, chatting with local farmers and officials. Narrated by Valley, the tape is heavy on sunrises over rice paddies, with no mention of his primary race back in Boston. Only the "Paid for by the Valley for Congress Committee" tag line even hinted at its purpose. The state rep showed it at meeting halls and in private homes, even arming his door-knockers with half-inch copies of the \$80,000 production.

Bestor Cram, of Northern Lights Productions, a documentary maker in Boston, told *Newsday*, "Political candidates are always playing catch-up with technologies that advertisers and manufacturers have known about for years. The VCR business was not thrust upon us just because Hollywood had extra films to sell. It was clear that the medium would penetrate our households for a number of different reasons."

"The tape got great response," says Valley assistant Carter Wilkie. But evidently not enough—Valley dropped out of the race in late spring.

The pre-videotape use of film for off-air showings to groups, on either an organized basis (e.g., at a specific meeting or auditorium) or in storefront headquarters, dates back almost four decades. According to Julian Kanter, University of Okla-

BY JON BOWERMASTER

homa professor and political commercial archivist, candidates first used television to air campaign spots in 1950. "That year, Sen. William Benton of Connecticut also produced a film that he played in storefronts for passersby to see. It would play and replay, with loudspeakers hung outside."

Kanter has been collecting political television and radio ads for 28 years and possesses what he believes to be the largest such collection in the country. "That same concept of putting together programs or material on film in looped cartridges was used all over the country through 1964. I recall one Illinois gubernatorial candidate in that year who had a 10- or 15-minute biographical documentary sent out on 8mm looped cartridges. They were available at his various headquarters and shown at meetings halls around the state. So it's not exactly a new idea. But the accessibility has certainly changed."

Kanter is not yet seeing scores of short-form video biographies crossing his transom, and predicts it is still a few years before they become de rigueur. "The only instance I'm aware of VHS cassettes produced for individual political communications is in California, where the people who are trying to unseat Supreme Court Justice Rose Bird are giving out tapes at video stores for free. They make their case against her on the cassette."

The Bird example proves that office-seekers are not alone in the political use of video. In Minnesota, the union striking Hormel created a 15-minute video to convey their grievances more persuasively to the public.

In 1984 two young political organizers, John Frew and Teresa Vilmain, took over the reins of Iowan Tom Harkin's race for the U.S. Senate. The Democratic Congressman was challenging a one-term Republican; pre-race polls had them even.

Frew and Vilmain latched onto the idea of using a video to introduce the candidate around the state, sold it to Harkin, and started gathering footage at various locations and functions. "With 99 counties and 8 or 9 media markets there were a lot of people we were missing if we just put ads on television," recalls Frew. "So, when Tom announced, we had a big three-day swing and on Saturday night we had simultaneous parties in 90 or so different cities. We had put together a 12-minute videotape, footage of Tom in every possible setting—farm, city, Iowa, Washington. He was on at the beginning and the end of the tape, speaking to the people right in their living rooms.

"We left the tapes with the county party people so they could show them again. They worked especially well at the county fairs. Somebody would take out their VCR and play it over and over. Cheap, cheap advertising. A couple of them were savvy enough to put it on a continuous loop."

Harkin won big. Frew and Vilmain moved on to big races in 1986—he as manager of Tim Wirth's Senate race in Colorado, she as Bob Edgar's Senate campaign manager in Pennsylvania. Neither have forgotten the success of that Harkin video. "My guess is we probably won't do that

here," says Frew, due to the concentrated population of the Rocky Mountain state, where there are 63 counties and 82 percent of the voters live in 10 of them. "There was one candidate who ran in the Republican primary here—Terry Considine—who put together a video and distributed 300 or 400 of them to the state convention delegates. They weren't enough, though—he didn't make it onto the ballot." Meanwhile, Vilmain launched Edgar's successful primary campaign via a 15-minute video shown simultaneously in

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Reagan's video greeting to the 1984 Republican Convention

UPI/BETTANN NEWS PHOTOS

POLITICAL ADVERTISING'S GREATEST HITS

Lisa Strasburg sounds excited. She's calling from New Orleans, where she's attending a national conference of state legislators, hawking an hour-long videocassette she produced. The captive audience of thousands, she reports, is buying her tape as if it were a newly-revised Bible. *The Classics of Political Television Advertising, Campaigns & Elections*, is the first of its ilk—a collection of 78 of the best and worst political television commercials, spanning back to the early 1950s.

"We've had a lot of interest from public relations firms and ad agencies," says Strasburg, a Washington-based producer with a background as an ABC-TV news writer and Carter campaign press person,

"but lots of political people have bought it, too. We collected over 1400 spots from a variety of places—the presidential campaign archives at the JFK Library in Boston, the Smithsonian, university and private collections—but primarily from over 45 media consultants around the country who were asked to submit their best work for review. Weeding out 78 was not easy."

Some of the spots are classics, like Tony Schwartz's 1964 "Daisy Commercial" for Lyndon Johnson. Others have never seen the glare of the tube, like a Doyle Dane Bernbach spot allying Sen. Barry Goldwater with the Ku Klux Klan. "Some of the material was pretty sensitive," says Strasburg. "One was for the Republicans, produced by Bailey-Deardourff. They asked

us to put on the tape that they had never intended it for broadcast." The spot: two rhinoceri mating, meant to illustrate how the Democrats were always on the Republicans' backs.

The tape is organized by categories: profiles, accomplishments, negative records, attack or response, issues, even musicals. "The Smothers Brothers did an entertainment show for HBO based on funny political spots, but nobody's yet done this kind of historical compilation. I think a lot of campaigns are buying the tape as a kind of reference guide."

(The tape is available for \$75 from *Campaigns & Elections*, National Press Building, North Tower, Suite 12E, Washington, D.C. 20004; 202-662-8959.) —JB

THIS VIDEOTAPE DIED SO YOURS WILL LIVE.

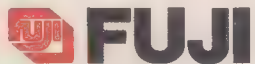


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We are gathered here today to bid a final farewell to one Fuji videotape. A tape that bravely stood up to the clutches of a Fuji quality controller. A tape that was forwarded, reversed, frozen and beaten for three solid days. The results weren't pretty.

This isn't the first time we've done this to tape. We do it hundreds of times a day. We do it to make sure that the tape you get from us gives you sharp, clear, lifelike pictures no matter how you treat it.

It breaks our hearts to destroy a tape we worked so hard to make. But it does please us to know that it's just as hard to destroy it. Because at Fuji, we'd rather kill a tape than have a tape kill your evening.



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Ultra Tiny TVs

**Miniature Sets Are
Shrinking In Size And
Growing In Quality**

BY GORDON McCOMB

You're sitting in a downtown coffee shop waiting to meet someone who's running late. Or you're at the beach but dying for an episode of your favorite soap. Or you'd like to replay the action you just shot with your portable video camera. Or you're overcome by a sudden desire to see how the big game with Green Bay is going, but can't leave your work station. In this age of miniaturization, there's no need to suffer the pangs of video withdrawal; \$150 and a couple of batteries will set you up with a tiny TV that can ease your boredom, keep you current, double as a field monitor, and pique the curiosity of almost anyone who spies you staring at the ultra-portable, flickering screen.

Tiny TVs—television sets with screens measuring five inches or under—are growing in

PAPER SCULPTURE BY AJIN

Ultra Tiny TVs

popularity and sophistication. Though they're not new, they're better, and even smaller, than when VIDEO first covered them in November 1983 ("Mini TVs: Some Are So Small, They Fit In Your Pocket"). Today, there's more to choose from, and more to look forward to.

Miniature television sets go back at least 20 years, with models like the Sony 4-203UW, with its 4-inch black & white picture tube, 32 state-of-the-art transistors, and 18 solid-state diodes. This baby weighed six pounds, with alkaline flashlight batteries included. Or the Delmonico-Nivico 4T-40UHF, another 4-incher, packed with 30 transistors and 33 diodes. The tiny TVs of the 1960s were novel spin-offs of the then-novel transistor, first used in room-size television sets by Philco in 1959.

What separates the compacts of today from those of the middle 1960s are sharper



Sony FD-45A 4-inch B&W 'Watchman'

pictures, better sound, lower overall price (even in 1986 dollars), and the chip. The transistor may have made small sets possible, but the microchip—which can hold thousands of transistors—made them worth owning.

The microchip has also made tiny TVs plentiful. In 1965, there were less than a half-dozen TVs with screen sizes under five inches; now there are over 60. Choosing a good model can be a tough job, so here is a closer look at the current crop of tiny TVs, and how you can harvest the right one.

FIELD AND SCREEN

The screens in tiny TVs range from 1.5 to five inches. There are plenty of sizes in between, but the most common are two and three inches. If you're used to viewing a room-size set, with a picture tube of, say, 19 inches or more, the screens in tiny TVs may seem frightfully small. But consider this: the optimum viewing distance from a room-size set is eight feet. If you place a piece of paper 18 inches away from your face, you can measure the apparent size of the screen. With a 19-inch set, for instance, the apparent viewing size is under two inches.

Now place a tiny TV 18 inches from your face. You'll find that the apparent size of the picture is roughly identical to the 19-inch model at eight feet. A 2-inch screen provides about the same size picture as a 19-inch TV; 3- to 5-inch sets provide even larger pictures. Remember, we're talking *apparent* size.

BUYER'S GUIDE TO 2- TO 5-INCH TELEVISIONS

BRAND	MODEL	PRICE	SCREEN SIZE ¹	SCREEN TYPE ²	COLOR/ B&W	DIMENSIONS ³	FEATURES
Casio	TV-70	\$129.95	2	LCD-P	B&W	0.5×2.6×5	Projection viewing
Casio	TV-30	\$149.95	3	LCD-P	B&W	1×5.4×3.2	Projection viewing, backlight option
Casio	TV-1100	\$299.95	2.6	LCD-P	Color	1.2×6.4×3.4	Pocket size, direct view, backlight
Casio	TV-2000	\$249.95	2.6	LCD-P	Color	1×5.4×3.4	Projection viewing, backlight option
Casio	TV-21	\$99	2	LCD-P	B&W	2.5×4.5×0.7	Projection viewing
Casio	TV-5000	\$350	2.5	LCD-P	Color	4.5×8.9×1.4	Direct view, backlight, AM/FM radio
Citizen	06TA	\$99.95	2	LCD-P	B&W	2.8×4.7×0.8	Projection viewing, backlight option
Citizen	08TA	\$159.95	3.5	LCD-P	B&W	3.5×5.7×0.9	Projection viewing, backlight option, A/V in, FM stereo
Citizen	17TA	\$199.95	2.7	LCD-P	Color	6×3.4×1.3	Direct view, backlight, A/V in
Citizen	10TA	\$149.95	3.5	LCD-P	B&W	4.6×8.6×1.3	Direct view, backlight, A/V in
Emerson	VR22	\$159.95	2	CRT	B&W	2×5.8×7.5	Detachable magnifier/screen hood
Emerson	BCR45	\$149.95	4.5	CRT	B&W	4.8×9.6×6.4	AM/FM clock radio
Emerson	VR50	\$148	4.5	CRT	B&W	3×5.4×1	AM/FM radio, cassette
Emerson	05TA-OA	\$249.95	2.7	LCD-P	Color	7×4×0.9	Projection viewing, backlight
Epson	Elf ET-12	\$350	2	LCD-A	Color	3.1×6.4×1.2	Direct view, A/V in
GE	7-7150	\$159.95	5	CRT	B&W	6.5×10.5×11	AM/FM radio
GE	7-7130	\$125	5	CRT	B&W	5.5×8.5×10	AM/FM radio
Goldstar	KMA-0401	\$149.95	4.5	CRT	B&W	5×9×7	AM/FM clock radio
Goldstar	BMS-200	\$150	2	CRT	B&W	6.6×3.1×1.4	
Goldstar	KMA-0506	\$159.95	5	CRT	B&W	5.6×9.1×9.1	AM/FM radio
JVC	CX-60US	\$429	5	CRT	Color	5.1×7×10.7	A/V in
Magnavox	BF3900	\$159.95	2	CRT	B&W	6.5×3×1.5	A/V in
Magnavox	BF3901	\$219.95	2	CRT	B&W	6.7×3.4×1.5	A/V in; AM/FM stereo
Magnavox	BF3904	\$199.95	4	CRT	B&W	n.a.	A/V in
Panasonic	TRG-511T	\$119.95	5	CRT	B&W	6.2×6.1×10.8	
Panasonic	TRH-512T	\$139.95	5	CRT	B&W	6.2×6.1×10.8	AM/FM radio
Panasonic	CT-515	\$449.95	5	CRT	Color	6.2×6.2×11.1	Red or silver case
Panasonic	CT-301	\$299	3	LCD-A	Color	6.5×3.5×0.9	Direct view, backlight

¹Inches, measured diagonally.

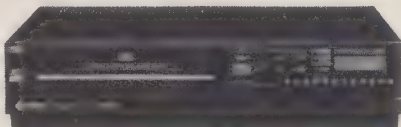
²A—Active LCD screen; P—Passive.

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We at Audio/Visual Wholesalers offer the best price on blank video and audio tapes and all related products. We are trying to establish a good customer base outside the New York Metropolitan area. We offer speedy delivery service via U.P.S. All of our products are factory packed. Our merchandise is guaranteed and our service dependable. We also want you to know that all of our products carry original Manufacturer's U.S. Warranties. We are offering phenomenal pricing on Memorex Pro-Plus, T-120, Scotch EG, T-120, and SKG SG and T-120. Call us and you won't be sorry. Audio/Visual Wholesaler Distributors, 3307 Avenue N, Brooklyn, NY 11235. Outside New York, call 800-922-1102, local call 718-258-2258.

New Low-Priced VHS VCR From Samsung



The new front-loading VT311T VHS videocassette recorder is the value leader in Samsung's model line-up. The slim-line design VCR with wireless remote features a 2 week/6 event programmable timer, 82 channel electronic tuner with 12 station presets, 3-speed record and playback, picture search, freeze frame, one-touch recording, automatic rewind and electronic tape counter. Suggested retail price is \$349.95. For more information, contact Richard Leister, Public Relations, Samsung Electronics America, 301 Mayhill St., Saddle Brook, NJ 07662, or call (201) 587-9600.

Goldstar ViewMax™ System Combines Color Television And VCR In One



Goldstar™ Electronics KMV-9002 ViewMax™ system combines a 19-inch color television and VHS-format video cassette recorder in one complete unit. ViewMax has simplified the installation process, requiring only that the user attach an antenna for television reception, plug the unit in, and turn it on. The full-featured 19-inch color television offers a quick-start picture tube and 105-channel capability with 12 presets available. The videocassette recorder features a front-loading system and three-speed recording capability, allowing up to eight-hour recording using T-160 tape. Automatic play and rewind controls are also offered. The ViewMax System has a wireless remote transmitter that controls TV and VCR functions.

RCA Video Tape Has SIX APPEAL



SIX APPEAL. Pick up one of these specially marked five-packs of RCA's T-120 Super High Grade Video Tape, and you'll get a coupon for a sixth one FREE. That's up to six hours (SLP mode) of super video and hi-fi audio performance. The RCA "Buy Five, Get Six" video tape offer. Now at your nearest RCA Video Tape dealer. He's got six appeal!

Vidtech Presents RS-2001



Vidtech's RS-2001 converts every TV into MTS stereo cinema-like sound and has every conceivable remote control feature all in one cable-ready integrated system. The RS-2001 transforms your TV into a \$1000 high-performance audio/video system and has all the extras, including Secondary Audio Programming (SAP) and dbx noise reduction. For additional information, call 212-868-5590, or write Vidtech, Inc., 350 5th Ave., Ste. 6707, New York, NY 10118.

Ora Electronics Introduces HQ Enhancer



Ora Electronics has introduced a new product for the video aftermarket—the HQ1000 Video Enhancer. The HQ1000 gives older VCR's the "High Quality" of modern units. This inexpensive Enhancer solves the problem of tape-to-tape copying: poor audio and video re-

production quality. Video and stereo audio signals are greatly improved, without consumers having to pay the expense of a new HQ VCR. For more information, contact Ora Electronics at (800) 431-8124 (outside California), or (800) 527-4222 (inside California).



Dealerscope Merchandising is the Marketing Magazine for Consumer Electronics and Major Appliance Retailing

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Like conventional sets, tiny TVs come with either color or black & white screens. Unlike room-size TVs, however, black & white compacts are by far the most common. Apart from being more expensive, the color sets tend to be 10 to 20 percent larger and heavier.

Tiny TVs use two types of screens, cathode ray tubes (CRTs) and liquid crystal displays (LCDs). TVs with CRT screens are slightly more prominent than sets equipped with LCDs, but that trend is waning. LCD sets have become, on the whole, less expensive, smaller, and lighter than their CRT counterparts.

Sets with CRTs generally have larger screens, however, so if you're looking for a TV with a 4- or 5-inch screen, you'll have to buy one with a CRT—at least this year. As of this writing, the largest black & white LCD screen is 3.5 inches, found on the Citizen 08TA and 10TA. The largest color LCD screen is 3 inches, used on the soon to be available Panasonic CT-301.

One reason LCD TVs have taken a while to catch on is that they are more difficult to design and manufacture than conventional sets. Many of the obstacles in engineering have been largely overcome, though, and Citizen, Casio, Seiko, and Panasonic have announced plans for new models and increased production.

But perhaps the main reason LCDs have been slow to grow is that the screens in the first models delivered extremely low resolution pictures that were blotchy and difficult to view. Except for closeups, facial features were completely lost, and you could forget about reading credits, addresses, and phone numbers.



Citizen 17TA
2.7-inch color TV

The screens in the early sets (versions of which are still sold) had a limited number of image-producing picture elements, or pixels. That made the picture look blocky. The screens on the first sets had no more than 15,000 pixels, 80 percent less than a conventional TV.

The displays in newer LCD sets have higher resolution—35,000 to 45,000 pixels—although only a few, like the Seiko LVD-302, the Panasonic CT-301 Pocket Watch, and the Epson Elf, deliver pictures that approach the quality of CRT screens. The Panasonic model has 89,280 pixels; the Seiko and Epson Elf models each have 52,800 pixels.

LCD screens come in two forms: passive and active. In a passive LCD screen, individual pixels are actuated directly by the circuitry inside the TV. A small voltage is directed to each pixel, with the level of voltage determining the relative brightness or darkness of the pixel.

In an active screen, the TV circuits activate tiny transistors sandwiched inside the LCD panel. Once activated by a controlling voltage, the transistor continues to light the pixel, until it receives another voltage pulse from the TV circuits. Because of their unique voltage handling capabilities, active screens (which often go by the name Thin Film Transistor, or TFT), deliver

BRAND	MODEL	PRICE	SCREEN SIZE ¹	SCREEN TYPE ²	COLOR/B&W	DIMENSIONS ³	FEATURES
Panasonic	TRG-535T	\$199	5	CRT	B&W	6.2×7.3×13.5	Pop-up screen, AM/FM radio
Quasar	UP1325YE	\$389.95	3.3	CRT	Color	5.5×8×8.1	Cable ready, A/V in
Quasar	AP1495YH	\$179.95	5	CRT	B&W	n.a.	AM/FM clock radio
Radio Shack	16-157	\$199.95	2.6	LCD-P	Color	6.4×3.2×1.4	
Radio Shack	16-166	\$179.95	4	CRT	B&W	8.4×4.7×3	
Radio Shack	16-156	\$159.95	3.5	LCD-P	B&W	5.7×3.4×0.7	
Radio Shack	16-133	\$119.95	5	CRT	B&W	5.1×9×10.7	
Radio Shack	16-155	\$99.95	2.5	LCD-P	B&W	4.7×2.6×0.8	
Radio Shack	16-114	\$99.95	5	CRT	B&W	4.5×7.7×10.2	
Radio Shack	16-115	\$79.95	5	CRT	B&W	5.4×4.7×6.7	
RCA	PVM050	n.a.		CRT	Color	6×6.1×13.9	Direct viewing, A/V in/out
RCA	PVM035	\$399	3.5	CRT	Color	4.5×5.2×12.2	Direct viewing, A/V in/out
Samsung	BT-123AJ	\$99.95	5	CRT	B&W	4.8×12.2×11.1	AM/FM radio
Sanyo	30 CTV1	\$499.95	3	CRT	Color	9.3×4.5×2.5	Rechargeable battery, A/V input, car cord
Seiko	LVD-302	\$299	2	LCD-A	Color	5.1×3×1.4	Backlight, direct viewing
Seiko	LVD-202	\$299	2	LCD-A	Color	5.8×3.2×1.1	Projection viewing, backlight
Sinclair	FTV2	\$100	2	CRT	B&W	3.5×5.5×1.2	
Sony	FD-30A	\$239.95	2	CRT	B&W	6.5×3.2×1.4	AM/FM radio
Sony	FD-40A	\$179.95	4	CRT	B&W	8.4×4.7×2.5	A/V in
Sony	FD-45A	\$234.95	4	CRT	B&W	8.4×4.7×2.5	Water resistant, FM stereo
Sony	FD-2A	\$159.95	2	CRT	B&W	6.1×2.5×1.4	
Sony	FD-3A	\$179.95	2	CRT	B&W	6.5×2.5×1.4	FM stereo, LCD clock
Sony	FD-10A	\$159.95	2	CRT	B&W	6.2×2.6×1.7	Available in silver, red, white, blue
Sony	KX-4200	\$469.95	3.7	CRT	Color	4.4×4.2×10.5	Component monitor/TV, 2 video ins
Sylvania	BDQ018SL	\$120	5	CRT	B&W	5×8×9.5	
Zenith	BT055S	n.a.	5	CRT	B&W	7.2×6×11.1	AM/FM Radio
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¹Height × width × depth in inches.

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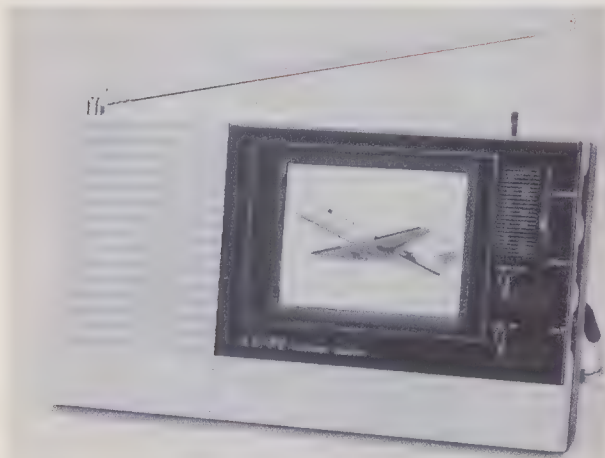
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Ultra Tiny TVs



Citizen 10TA 3.5-inch B&W TV

sharper pictures with greater contrast.

Only a few TVs have active LCD screens: the Epson Elf ET-12 and ET-20, the Panasonic Pocket Watch, and the Seiko VLD-202 and LVD-302. Active LCD screens are harder to manufacture, so sets with them are usually 10 to 20 percent more expensive than TVs with conventional passive LCD screens.

MIRROR IMAGES

Tiny TV screens are designed either for projection or direct viewing. With projection types, light passes through the LCD panel, and the image on the panel is reflected off a mirror. You watch TV by looking down at the mirror. When the set is not in use, the LCD panel folds down, so the TV can be more easily carried in a pocket or purse. Projection TVs are the simplest and least expensive, and the mirror helps to enlarge the picture. But you have to keep the mirror clean and dust free. With the direct viewing types, you gaze into the screen, like you do with a regular TV. The LCD panel can be permanently recessed in the body of the set, or attached to a pop-up lid. Raise the lid when you want to watch TV; push it back down when you're through.

All LCD TVs need an external light source to make a picture. Most projection sets are designed to take advantage of whatever light happens to be handy—the sun, overhead lights, a desk lamp, whatever. The brighter the light, the better the picture. Direct-view tiny TVs often use ambient light as well. But instead of first passing the light through the LCD panel, then reflecting it with a mirror, the process is reversed—the light is reflected by a mirror, then passed through the panel.



**Sanyo 30 CTV
1.3-inch color TV**



**Quasar UP1325YE
3.3-inch color TV**

Many direct-view tiny TVs have a fluorescent backlight either built-in or available as an option. The backlight lets you watch TV anywhere, but it consumes more power so the batteries don't last as long. Small self-contained backlights are also available as an option for a few of the projection-type tiny TVs. The light attaches to the lid of the TV like a backpack.

You'll find two types of CRTs in tiny TVs. The first kind is just a miniaturized version of the CRT found in conventional room-sized sets. At the front of the tube is a large faceplate. Behind the faceplate is the neck, which tapers off into a small cylinder. Inside the cylinder is the electron gun (sometimes guns), that generates the light that makes the picture. Tiny TVs with this type of CRT are usually squarish in size, and comprise the largest of the group.

The slimline "pocket" TVs use a CRT with a radically different design—the beam index tube. The faceplate and neck are bent at 90-degree angles. Deflection plates at the crook of the neck bend the electrons emitted from the electron guns so they strike against the rear wall of the tube, which is visible through the faceplate. The design of the tube decreases the size of the set, although TVs with beam index tubes aren't as small as LCD models with the

continued on page 156

TAKE-ALONG MONITOR

The viewfinder in your portable camera is great for composing and focusing shots, but what if someone else wants to see what you're shooting? Or what if the viewfinder is black & white, and you really need to see how the camera is picking up colors? A solution: use a tiny TV as a tiny monitor.

A growing number of compact TVs have separate video and audio jacks. To use the set as a monitor, attach a cable from the video out jack of the VCR to the video in jack of the TV. Most tiny TVs use 1/8-inch miniature plugs for the video in jack, so you'll need an adapter if you use standard RCA-to-RCA dubbing cables.

If your tiny TV lacks a separate video in jack, you still may be able to use it as a monitor, but the picture won't be as sharp. Your portable VCR must have an RF output. Attach a single wire from the VCR's VHF out jack to the TV. On the TV, clip the wire to the antenna. On the VCR, insert the wire into the center conductor of the F-connector. Tune the TV to channel 3 or 4, depending on the RF converter on the VCR, and turn it on.

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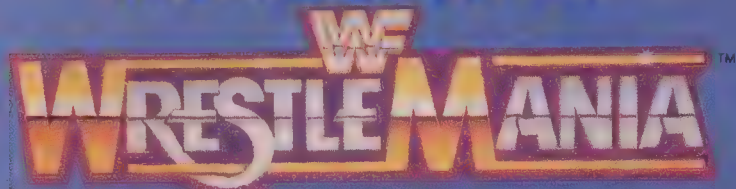
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The Sun Never Sets On

TOM HANKS

With 6 Tapes In 3 Years Splash's Likable Star Builds A Comic Empire



BY FRANK LOVECE

Two guys, walking down the street—an actor and a comedian. Comedian says, “Boy, I envy you. You go up on stage in these great dramatic roles, and you move people and make them think about their lives and their families and their work. Why, you can make people cry!” The actor says, “Thank you. Thank you very much. I’m very flattered.” The comedian says, “Don’t be. I’m only joking.”

This is a true story. These two guys actually exist. They’ve both been roaming around Tom Hanks’ brain ever since the popular comic actor followed his sudden film stardom in 1984’s *Splash* with four less-than-distinguished farces: *Bachelor Party*, *The Man with One Red Shoe*, *Volunteers*, and, in something of a career reprieve, the critically crucified but extremely profitable *The Money Pit*. Hanks had been thrown into the double-or-nothing starmania of contemporary Hollywood, where nobody gets brought along slowly. One hot performance, and suddenly you’re the excuse for crummy ideas becoming bankable movies. From there, it’s either limos and creative control, or dinner theater and TV movies. Maybe even TV dinners.

Hanks—“the young Jack Lemmon”—has so far been more fortunate than such shooting stars as Jennifer Beals, Michael Pare, and Kevin Bacon. He’s made so many movies in such a short time—six in three years, five of which are on tape—

W. KAREL/SYGMA



Hanks for the memories: in '*Bachelor Party*,' '*The Money Pit*,' and with Daryl Hannah in '*Splash*' (clockwise from top)

that his face is presently all over the tube. Lucky for him, his insubstantial films generally play better on TV than on amplifying theater screens. Hanks' success is also due, of course, to the fact he's not only talented but perhaps even gifted. Jackie Gleason (his co-star in the recent *Nothing in Common*) says, "I admire Tom because he has the right moves. Anybody can do a line, but he has the moves. That's the important thing. And he's got 'em all."

Perhaps sensing the career traps that have sandbagged other genuinely talented flash-fires, Hanks the comedian is trying to become Hanks the actor. He's filmed the "dramatic comedy" *Nothing in Common* and the new WW II romantic drama, *Love Is Ever Young*. Dice in hand, Tom Hanks is hoping desperately for a hard seven.

"I don't think about my marketability," Hanks insists, a little nervously. "I don't think audiences do, either. I think people forget the flops. Except," he shifts gears, joking darkly, "when *newspaper* writers bring them up. I read about that stuff, believe me: 'Tom Hanks, who can't make a decent movie to save his life since *Splash*, de da de da de da. Geesh, what a cheap shot!'"

But that's show biz. Even Hanks, tucked into a snazzy double-breasted suit and oozing wiseass charm, has to admit it's been turkey season for much of his career. *The Man with One Red Shoe* and *Volunteers*, in particular, were served up with mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce. "I figure

those movies didn't touch any kind of resonant chord," Hanks reasons. "It also may be," he allows, "that they weren't well-made. They're not the greatest movies, they're not seamless, they have some faults. What can you say? We took a shot and they just didn't do real well." Later he adds that, "If I want to take a cheap shot, I can always say, 'Well, I didn't write it. I had to say those lines.' I can always hide behind that. And if I'm really not funny in a movie, someone else will be," he shrugs.

Hanks normally doesn't have to worry about being funny. He just is. Even in his worst movies, his best moments have been when directors turn him loose to be the quick-witted, basically decent loudmouth—his steady core persona. That persona seems, naturally enough, an extension of Hanks' own self. In an interview, he can't resist playful sarcasm, eyes and mouth moving so fast one gets the impression he thinks the rest of the world (except, maybe, Robin Williams) moves too slowly. Ask about the slasher movie (*He Knows You're Alone*) that gave him what most young actors hope for—a screen debut, credibility, the chance for that all-important union card—and his first response

is, "Well, it certainly went to the top of my resume!"

ONCE UPON A TOM

The funny thing is, that *did* go to the top of his resume. The 31-year-old has been a professional actor/comedian for virtually all his adult life. He knows from career moves—something he often conceals behind an "I don't plan anything" image. Hanks turned pro just three years after graduating from Oakland (California) Skyline High School. (The class of '74 alumnus returned this year to give the commencement speech.) A self-described loud-





'I admire Tom because he has the right moves,' says Jackie Gleason. 'Anybody can do a line, but he has the moves.'



Tom Hanks with Peter Scolari in 'Bosom Buddies' (top) and with Jim Belushi and Lori Singer in 'The Man With One Red Shoe'

mouthed goof-off who pulled straight Cs, Hanks went on to Chabot Junior College in Hayward, followed by a year at Cal State in Sacramento, where he majored in theater arts. While auditioning for a regional production of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, Hanks was, as they say, "discovered."

"After the morning's auditions," says Vincent Dowling, an elfin Irish director whom Hanks credits for his first break, "I said to my wife, 'There's a young man here with star quality.' He had the looks, the understanding, and the innate comic talent of a very underestimated comic talent of the past, Tony Curtis. I cast Tom as Yasha, the self-centered, comically ruthless manservant who uses the other servants and his mistress to his own ends. He was beautiful in it."

Dowling offered Hanks an unpaid internship at Cleveland's Great Lakes Shakespeare [now Theater] Festival, which he then headed. Hanks dropped out of school to accept. While with the Festival, Hanks learned theater from the floorboards up, and even copped a Cleveland Critics Circle Award for his Proteus in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. After a single summer there, Hanks moved to New York, but returned to the Festival to perform in rotating repertory for two more seasons.

During the rest of the year in New York, however, Hanks starved. It helped. "For about a year and a half," he recalls, "I was there with a family and \$10 in the bank. After *that* insecurity, anything else is a piece of cake."

Hanks spent the time performing with the Riverside Shakespeare Company, doing off-off-Broadway, landing an agent, and going to auditions. He won a brief role in *He Knows You're Alone*, "a hack 'n' slash made on Staten Island for about 90 bucks. I did three days on it. I just showed up, learned how to hit a mark, and then moved on."

BOSOMANIA

What he moved on to was nothing less than a network TV show, the two-season ABC sitcom *Bosom Buddies*. Joined by wife and son, Hanks moved to California.

The show was (literally) a drag, borrowing its concept from *Some Like It Hot*. Hanks and Peter Scolari (now a regular on *Neuhart*) starred as two young advertising men who are forced to rent an apartment in a females-only residence, a situation that led to their wearing women's clothing a lot.

For the most part, the show worked, often in spite of its ludicrous premise. Hanks, as the manic idea man, and Scolari, as the contemplative worrier, seemed to be bantering in a different world than much of the cast; while *Bosom Buddies* was occasionally bad-going-on-embarrassing, the bosom buddies themselves were often great. Since the show has been syndicated widely in the wake of Hanks' fame,

videotapers can catch the 39 episodes and record them for posterity.

When the series was cancelled, Hanks "wasn't particularly scared or worried," he says. "I didn't work for a long time, but I did have a deal with CBS for a new show. That didn't work out, so I did some episodic stuff," as well as the Canadian-made TV movie, *Mazes and Monsters*, "but it was never like, 'Oh my god! My show's been cancelled! I'm dead! DEAD! Quick—call up *Cross-Wits*! I'll do a couple weeks!' Sure, there was plenty of insecurity," he admits, "but nothing unique."

If anything, the ax fell fortuitously. *Bosom Buddies* had been shot on the Paramount lot, as was *Happy Days*, on which Hanks guested. Coincidentally, both producer Garry Marshall and departing costar Ron Howard were fledgling movie directors. (Marshall would ease out of TV to direct *Young Doctors in Love*, *The Flamingo Kid*, and *Nothing in Common*; Howard had been learning the craft in B-movieland with *Grand Theft Auto*.) Hanks found himself *sans* series just about the same time Howard was in need of an average-looking funny guy for a modest comedy he was directing for Disney.

Hanks jumped: *Splash*!

THE EDGE OF DRAMA

Tom Hanks uses the word "actor" a lot. Not comedian, actor.

"I did what any actor does," he says of

continued on page 158

VIDEOGRAPHY

HE KNOWS YOU'RE ALONE

1980. Don Scardino, Caitlin O'Heaney, Elizabeth Kemp, Tom Hanks; dir. Armand Mastroianni. 94m. (R) \$59.95. MGM/UA.

RONA JAFFE'S MAZES AND MONSTERS

1982. Tom Hanks, Wendy Crewson, David Wallace, Chris Makepeace; dir. Steven H. Stern. 103m. \$59.95. Karl.

SPLASH

1984. Tom Hanks, Daryl Hannah, John Candy; dir. Ron Howard. 109m. (PG) \$79.95. LV \$34.95. Touchstone.

BACHELOR PARTY

1984. Tom Hanks, Tawny Kitaen, Adrian Zmed; dir. Neil Israel. 105m. (R) St cc \$79.95. LV \$34.95. CBS/Fox.

THE MAN WITH ONE RED SHOE

1985. Tom Hanks, Dabney Coleman, Jim Belushi; dir. Stan Dragoti. 92m. (PG) cc \$79.95. CBS/Fox.

VOLUNTEERS

1985. Tom Hanks, Rita Wilson, John Candy; dir. Nicholas Meyer. 106m. (R) Hi St \$79.95. Thorn.

THE MONEY PIT

1986. Tom Hanks, Shelley Long, Alexander Godunov, Maureen Stapleton; dir. Richard Benjamin. 91m. (PG) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. MCA.

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With 15,000 TV Shows The Museum Of Broadcasting Is A Videophile's Dream Come True

From a distance, it could be any nondescript New York office building. You have to stand directly in front of the Museum of Broadcasting's slim facade to notice the monitor enticing passers-by with clips from exhibits. Inside, though, is a videoholic's dream come true: 15,000 television shows, all available to the public for on-site viewing.

This is one museum that's easy on the feet. On a typical Saturday, visitors sit at 23 custom-built consoles, don headphones, (up to two per console), and watch the likes

of Bob Newhart, Groucho Marx (on *You Bet Your Life*), *I Love Lucy*, and Amos 'n' Andy. One student freeze-frames the late Chicago mayor, Richard Daley, addressing the 1968 Democratic national convention so he can make some notes. On other floors, people are taking in a Bob Hope special—part of a two-month-long tribute—and a televised opera from Britain's Channel 4 in the Museum's two projection-system "videotheques." And the ground-floor theater is full of Ernie Kovacs fans attracted by a three-month retrospec-

tive of the comic artist's work.

The Museum of Broadcasting, ten years old this November, is no longer just an open secret among television fanatics. (Besides the video collection, the Museum has 10,000 radio broadcasts—dating back to 1920—on audiocassette, and 2,400 radio production scripts.) Over the last three years, attendance has tripled to more than 100,000 annually. Not so paradoxically, Museum president Robert Batscha credits the VCR with spurring interest in the Museum's holdings.

BY SCOTT ISLER

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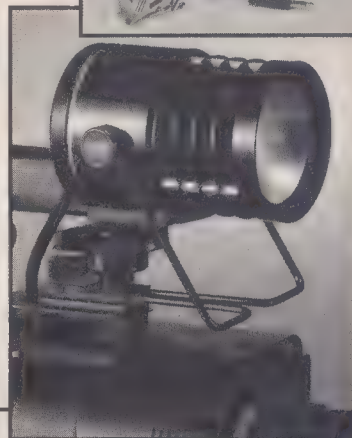
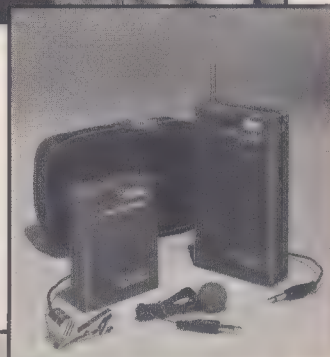
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"Ten years ago," Batscha says, "the Museum was the only place where people could see and hear historic radio and television programs. With the home video market, more and more television programs are becoming available, and it whets people's appetites, feeds a greater interest in this medium. That's part and parcel of what we're about: to help people have a greater appreciation of what the creative forces are and who the creative people are in television."

SECOND HONEYMOON

The relationship between home video and the Museum is a two-way street. For example, members of RALPH—the *Honeymooners* appreciation society—will be forever grateful to Ronald Simon, the Museum's television curator. Simon's sleuthing resulted in an expansion of the *Honeymooners* canon beyond the wildest dreams of Gleason-watchers who had fully digested the 39 syndicated episodes.

"I'd read about these live *Honeymooners* broadcasts in various books," Simon recalls, "and they always said these broadcasts were destroyed. It was always in the back of my mind that I would love to see how the live *Honeymooners* looked, to compare them to what evolved in those 39 episodes. I'd gone to CBS Program Information to see when these live *Honeymooners* broadcasts might have occurred; they were an irregular part of *The Jackie Gleason Show*. So I had a list of dates to work from. Going through the CBS vault inventory, I found four programs that might have contained *Honeymooners* sketches. We had the material transferred, and were fortunate to find four complete Jackie Gleason shows that had very long

The Museum was shocked by the huge crowds lined up for 1984's 'Lost Honeymooners' Exhibit.

Honeymooners sketches, about 40 minutes each."

Two summers ago the Museum exhibited those sketches as "The Lost Honeymooners." Simon wasn't sure what the reaction would be, but he soon found out: Crowds lined up around the block, filling up the Museum's 63-seat theater for each of the three-to-four daily viewings. "Immediately the phones rang from many cable services and independent producers: 'Where did you get these programs?' Certainly it got back to Jackie Gleason."

Indeed. Gleason checked his own vaults and discovered he had kinescopes of some 75 live *Honeymooners* broadcasts. Thanks to the Museum-engendered publicity, Gleason made a deal with Showtime/The Movie Channel—according to Simon, "one of the first to contact us"—to air his treasure trove. Viacom (Showtime's owner) then syndicated the shows for broadcast;

now Maljack/MPI is issuing *The Honeymooners: The Lost Episodes* as a series of videocassettes.

"Unfortunately we didn't have a cut in all the deals that were made!" Simon smiles. "But we were very proud we could set everything in motion." The Museum presented the shows as its first *Discovery* exhibit. Subsequent *Discovery* screenings have unearthed *I Remember Mama* broadcasts, and James Dean's extensive work in television. Both have attracted interest from television stations and cable networks; the Dean series may also become a videocassette. The video industry obviously keeps an eye on the Museum's activities.

SEARCH FOR YESTERDAY

"One of our roles," Batscha says, "is to do everything we can to find programs thought to be missing. Most programs are probably out there—in somebody's closet, or warehouse, or garage." Simon, not quite as optimistic, feels that, for pre-1950 material, "there's not so good a chance—but there's always a chance. Sporting events haven't been preserved that much." The Museum's current wanted list includes Don Larsen's perfect game from the 1956 World Series, and the first (1967) Super Bowl; the latter was videotaped by two networks but erased.

On the other hand, Simon is "never surprised when something turns up." The Museum recently scratched the original (1951) *Amahl and the Night Visitors* off its want list when an NBC editor appeared with a copy from his own collection. Sources can include engineers who worked on productions, relatives of those involved, or even estate sales. Simon mentions "one gentleman" who "turned up the first half of a very rare production of Humphrey Bogart's dramatic debut on television. He recreated his role in *The Petrified Forest* with James Stewart and Lauren Bacall. I know we'll find the second half in another collection."

It's easier for the Museum to keep up with current programming. Contracts with networks and production houses enable it to glean a certain number of hours each year. Simon estimates that the Museum's collection grows at a rate of 2500 to 3000 hours annually.

There are other video archives in the U.S.—and some, notably the collection at UCLA, have larger holdings than the Museum of Broadcasting. But none are as accessible to the public. "Anybody can come in and watch any program they want to," Batscha states proudly. To use the individual viewing consoles, museum-goers fill out a request form after consulting a card file that cross-references the collection in 25 ways. Museum employees fetch and lock in the Beta-I cassette (dubbed from a U-matic master) at the console; the viewer never touches it.



The Museum has 23 custom-built viewing consoles.

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"Tapes will play 150 times before we have to make a new copy," Simon notes. "We've had to replace some that have worn out from demand." The most popular program in the video collection is the Beatles' initial appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*; two separate *Amos 'n' Andy* episodes are in second and third place, followed by two Barbra Streisand specials, the Judy Garland series, Edward R. Murrow's report on Joe McCarthy and the first *I Love Lucy*. (The most popular radio program is Orson Welles' production of *War of the Worlds*.) The Museum's maintenance crew stays busy replacing worn-out heads, broken solenoids, and fried transistors. And you think your VCR gets a lot of use?

As public as it is, the Museum is careful that its collection never becomes too public. "We own no rights to any of the programs we have in the collection," Batscha says. "Under no circumstances can individuals get copies of programs from the collection. We have probably the tightest security possible." Tapes are kept in a locked vault, with a halon gas system to protect them in case of fire. The only material the Museum sells on tape is the fund-raising *Master Collection Series* of 20 classically-packaged videocassettes reflecting past exhibitions. The contents—such TV classics as *Requiem for a Heavyweight*, *Marty*, and *Star Trek*—are all available cheaper in the home video market, but the series is for a good cause.

All is not lost, though, if you can't make it to the Museum in person. The institution has begun cautiously circulating exhibit and collection highlights to other cities. Last March, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art hosted the Museum of Broadcasting's third annual foray to the west coast. "A Television Festival" sampled retrospectives on Ernie Kovacs, James Dean, Fred Astaire, Judy Garland, and jazz on television, among other events. The Dean show also traveled to Houston's Museum of Fine Arts, which earlier reran an exhibit of televised ballets choreographed by George Balanchine. This year the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis extensively reprised various Museum exhibitions. London, Rome, and Paris have also benefited from the Museum's generosity.

PAY TV

The Museum of Broadcasting Inc. owes its existence to William Paley, chairman of CBS. In 1974, Paley contacted former ABC vice-president and *Omnibus* producer Robert Saudek about heading a—well, a Museum of Broadcasting. When Saudek agreed, Paley turned into a sugar daddy the likes of which Lorelei Lee dreamed about: Paley not only contributed money (including a five-year financial guarantee) but also a building the Paley Foundation owned in midtown Manhattan. (The Museum pays token rent.)

Batscha replaced Saudek, now with the

Library of Congress, in 1981. The Museum opened in November 1976 with a collection of 718 broadcasts and a budget of \$250,000. It has since expanded in every conceivable direction—the present budget is \$2.2 million—without changing its address (1 East 53 St., New York, N.Y. 10022; 212-752-7684). As other tenants have moved out, the Museum has taken over added space, but it's still not enough. A planned relocation elsewhere in Manhattan fell through earlier this year. Batscha, however, is determined to find less cramped quarters without putting the Museum in the red. He estimates the cost of building or buying a new space at \$30 to \$40 million.

Even though its budget has tripled in four years, Batscha says the Museum needs "significantly more money. There's a lot more we can do in terms of making it accessible to the public. We'd like to do more traveling exhibitions. More space—a new building is critical to what we're trying to do. But most important, more programs for the collection." Visitor contributions (\$3 for adults) and membership fees, he says, provide an "inconsequential amount," no more than ten percent of the Museum's operating budget. The rest comes from corporations, foundations, and large individual donations.

Meanwhile, TV fans keep coming in, and Simon keeps looking—for pilots of *I Love Lucy* and *All in the Family*; for the 1954 network premiere of *The Tonight Show* (most '50s and '60s *Tonight* shows are lost or destroyed); for *Magic with Mary Martin*, an Easter 1959 children's special; for the opening ceremonies of the 1939 New York World's Fair—the first commercial telecast.

"One of the advantages of looking for programming," Batscha says, "is you can identify what you can't find." It isn't easy, though. Simon elaborates: "There's very little record of what has been broadcast, so we do our own original research. We get information from network files, then we try to go to as many reviews as we can." Once the target has been set, the Museum contacts people involved with the production, as well as private collections, to try and hunt the shows down.

To assemble an exhibition that makes artistic sense, Simon explains, "It's important to talk to the creators and producers of shows, to see what they thought they were doing. We did that with *The Lucy Show*; it was very interesting talking to the two sets of writers who were really the force behind the shows."

Simon uses a similar research process



Museum president Robert Batscha

for newscasts, with generic differences: "You're looking at how important events were covered, and for contrasts with other systems of technology." Thinking of the collection as a whole, Simon looks for "landmark broadcasts, ones that set a standard others followed, imitated, or stole. We also try to get the best examples of the Nielsen top 20. So someone studying at the Museum 30 or 40 years from now will have a very good sense of both what were perceived to be outstanding broadcasts, and what was watched by people. Many times," he notes wryly, "they're mutually exclusive."

SAVE IT FOR LATER

The technical innovation of reusable videotape in the late 1950s has been bad news for the Museum; unlike filmed kinescopes of earlier broadcasts, many videotaped productions were erased to record something else. Like Batscha, Simon sees today's video-consciousness as helping the Museum in its work. "Now there's so many different markets for television material. Things they thought they could never sell again now have a market in cable or home video, or segments can be used in documentaries. Certain levels of decision have to be gone through before things can be erased. Fortunately, we're part of that level."

Upcoming exhibits at the Museum will honor the British Broadcasting Corporation, Mary Martin, the venerable western, and rock music on television. And attention, all you RALPHies: the Museum is negotiating with one of Jackie Gleason's old writers to obtain some really old "Honey-mooners" sketches, from Gleason's stint on the DuMont network. "There's a much harsher, almost realistic feel to *The*

continued on page 159

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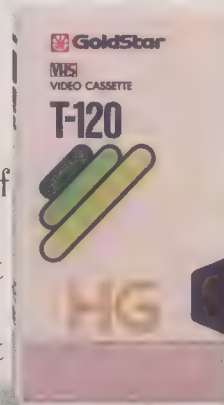
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Programming

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NEWS AND VIEWS

BY MARK FLEISCHMANN

TEN REASONS TO BE THANKFUL

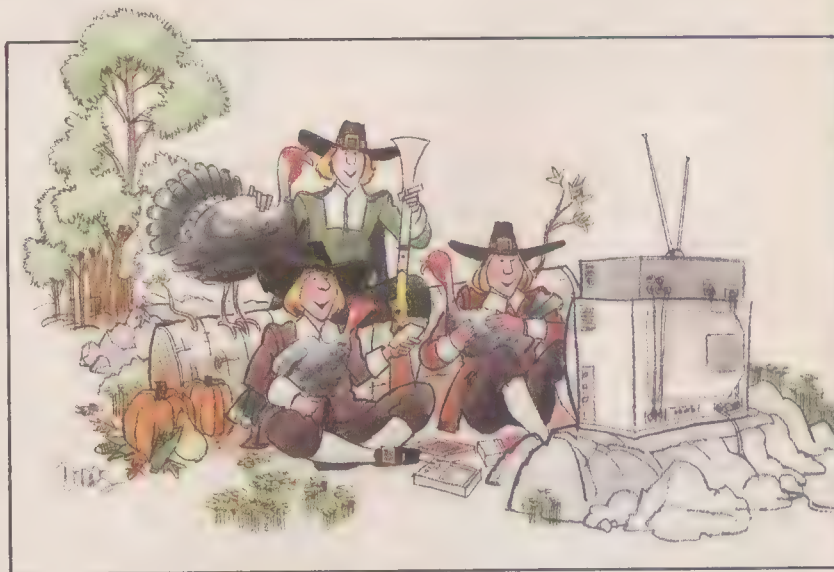
Bird is the word this month. After you've carved and eaten yours, doubtless the assembled family and friends will adjourn to the den for some after-dinner viewing. If your mind should wander as you rewind between selections, meditate on the following 10 reasons why you could consider yourself a lucky tuber:

1. *Falling List Prices.* Pre-recorded programming prices run from the standard \$79.95 for new Hollywood blockbusters to \$7.95 for vintage TV programs. In the middle, thanks to an almost industry-wide rethink of the purchase versus rental market, is a vast selection of high-quality material in the \$19.95 to \$24.95 range. Collectors of the world, unite!

2. *Minority Formats.* Thanks to Beta for providing an alternative to VHS in the past and present, to 8mm for offering an alternative in the future, and to LaserVision for all of the above.

3. *Criterion.* This spunky little LV specialty label licenses the cream of film history and issues most of it in the standard-play mode for maximum video quality and access to the LV disc format's whole roster of special effects (still-step, slow motion, etc.). Criterion's *Swing Time*, the Fred & Ginger vehicle directed by George Stevens, was the ambrosial viewing event of 1986 (so far). Watch for the label's impending release of Max Ophuls' classic *Lola Montes*.

4. *Good Made-for-Videos.* High-quality original productions are the great dream of the video industry. Normally hard-



GLENN DODDS

headed executives get all starry-eyed when they talk of upgrading video from the end of the line for theatrical films. Here and there in the resulting flow of original productions, an audacious idea works out. MCA's *You Can Win* is fascinating, as is the '60s *Motown Time Capsule*. Richard Thompson's *Across a Crowded Room* (Sony) and Robyn Hitchcock's *Gotta Let This Hen Out!* (Jettisoundz import) gave video exposure to unlikely but worthy musicians. Companies like SF Rush Video (a movie-trailer specialist) and Rhino Video have made a cottage industry out of mining film history for campy jewels. The list goes on.

5. *Video Socializing.* Television has long tended to isolate individuals and families, in a kind of polar opposite to the communal experience of moviegoing. But when friends call each other up with

an invite to screen a new (or old) title hot off the shelf, TV stops being an anti-social medium.

6. *Life without Commercials.* To the ad-free videocassette/disc and the ad-zapping remote control we owe countless moments of liberation from mercantile brainwashing. This may be the single greatest improvement in the quality of American life of the last several decades.

7. *Life without Video.* I mean, just occasionally. Have you ever noticed how intense movies can seem when you haven't been in a theater for months? Especially with that sea of laughing/gasping/reacting people surrounding you? Often seeing a film on film enhances future video viewings by indelibly stamping vivid images on your brain; later, at home, you can relive the feeling.

8. *Acquisitions People with Taste.*

There actually exist businessmen and -women in the video industry who believe it's smart to release programming that doesn't insult the intelligence. Some how, quality material almost always finds its way into the marketplace sooner or later: ambitious new movies like Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (Paramount), wonderful old movies by forgotten masters like Frank Borzage and Douglas Sirk, foreign masterpieces like Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu* (Embassy), and nontheatrical gems like Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George* (Karl-Lorimar). A grateful tip of the hat to those who made it all happen. Naive? You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.

9. *Video Stores with Taste.* A good video store should be more than a VHS top 20 rental parlor. Maybe your local store hasn't the space or fiscal might to maintain double or triple inventories for minority formats—but that shouldn't prevent the owner from special-ordering LaserVision, Beta, or obscure VHS titles for those so inclined. Best of all are the places where a well-informed and enthusiastic staff can recommend Howard Hawks' *Ball of Fire* over *Meatballs II* to customers who are likely to appreciate the difference.

10. *The Artists.* They are too numerous to name. Special citations to Woody Allen, whose fearlessly idiosyncratic work has made him America's most distinctive working filmmaker; and to Sylvester Stallone, whose vicious parodies of American macho atavism constitute the most telling and subversive satire in movies today.

MOTOWN SWINGS INTO VIDEO

Can the ubiquitous "they" make new video out of old music? One attempt to do so is the fruit of a partnership between MCA Home Video and a new division of Motown Records. The label approached MCA with a stack of ideas; four were actually produced and released recently. The collection includes two decades' worth of *Motown Time Capsules*, an automotive fantasy (*Motown's Mustang*), and *The Last Radio Station*. According to Suzie Peterson, MCA's director of new product development, "These are the kinds of shows that point the way to the future of original programming for home video. They make sense in terms of how people use entertainment programming."

Peterson calls the Motown tapes "a hybrid of movies and music—fun to watch, but you don't have to sit there glued to your TV. If you can't catch it all at one time, you'll catch different things



PETER KUPER

at different times. You might be talking on the phone, you might be reading and listening. That's the way I watch television, anyway. People tend to do multiple things in their homes."

Of course, some do watch movies from beginning to end, but Peterson doesn't think people "always want to commit that much time and attention. This is a philosophical approach to home video programming that makes sense to me—and to other people, too."

Meanwhile, Vestron's *MTV Closet Classics* makes more conventional use of '60s/'70s rock heritage. Familiar special effects dress up some of the vintage clips but everything here is stagebound and straightforward. This is essentially MTV for people who never forgave the Sex Pistols for inventing punk. It's also music video for people who never forgave MTV for inventing itself—no concept clips or big budget productions. All five tapes sell for \$29.95.

SCANLINES

"They're special-interest titles, and we judged that the Beta pre-orders would probably come in too low to justify that format for those particular titles." That's Warner spokesman Mike Finnegan's explanation for his company's VHS-only releases of Jacques Cousteau and Spanish-subtitled film videotapes. The Warner decision to eliminate Beta for these lines follows Prism's announcement several months ago that its \$11.95 "Video Collection" would be VHS-only. Though many majors will remain committed to providing Beta tapes for customers who special order them, expect additional selective Beta defections in the year ahead.

Paramount wants to put a Ford (Harrison, that is) in your Xmas stocking: the label is releasing *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (\$29.95) as part of its winter promotion, which reduces 20 other titles to \$19.95 through January.

Anything approved by both the Film Advisory Board and the NAACP can't be all bad. Prism's *Kid Power*, a \$14.95 release showing kids of all backgrounds playing harmoniously together, will be packaged with an "identity kit" that enables parents to send fingerprints and descriptions of their children straight into an FBI dossier.

One of the best sources for public domain movie classics is Cable Films Video, a specialist in the 1930s and '40s—the two best decades for the art of film in America. October releases include *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. At \$24.95, Cable's prices are higher than the PD norm—but the extra quality Cable offers may be worth it to video/cinemaphiles. (Box 7171, Kansas City, Missouri 64113; 913-362-2804.)

The Golden Turkey Promotion—who can resist a name like that? The infamous Rhino label will drop prices to \$29.95 for such immortal birds as *Orgy of the Dead* and *Battle of the Bombs*. Promo runs "through Turkey Day," says spokesman Randy Freeman.

The nonprofit sector got another boost from another "aid" tape when Kultur's *Concert Aid* hit the stores in September. Sir George Solti conducts the BBC Symphony in Beethoven's Fifth at a Royal Albert Hall gala; all profits go to Oxfam relief efforts in Ethiopia and the Sudan. Your \$19.95 would be well spent.

Reviews

FILMS PRODUCED FOR THEATERS



Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom

INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

1984. Harrison Ford, Kate Capshaw, Ke Huy Quan; dir. Steven Spielberg. 118m. (PG) Hi St cc \$29.95. LV \$29.95. Paramount. Image: good.

This prequel to 1981's *Raiders of the Lost Ark*—a far fresher Indiana Jones saga—suffers from jungleland rot, proving you can take Spielberg out of the suburbs, but you can't take the suburbs out of Spielberg. Although aiming to fashion sophisticated Disneylands of the screen, Spielberg reinforces the most banal prejudices of the mass audience he presumably respects. His method is simple: plop a makeshift nuclear family into a hostile environment, then demonstrate how their cunning, witty, and superior Western ways will prevail over seemingly insurmountable odds.

Harrison Ford again cashes in on the archeologist-adventurer character he first limned in *Raiders*. (Or was it *Star Wars*?) This time, he's out to recover a magical stone stolen from an impover-

ished Indian village, along with all their children, by the local death cult. Accompanying him are Willie Scott (Capshaw), a ditty singer, and Short Round (Quan), Jones' feisty, pre-adolescent Chinese sidekick. Predictably shrieky and vapid, Willie embodies most every dumb-blond cliché imaginable, twisting her metaphorical ankle at every turn.

But if Spielberg's hard on women, it's nothing compared to his depiction of Indians, who are either pathetically dependent starving villagers grateful for any white-skinned assistance whatsoever, or cold-blooded torturers, murderers, child-enslavers, and general zombies of death. Not to mention their imagined taste in food: youngsters will no doubt giggle themselves silly over a meal consisting of live eels, eyeball soup, huge beetles, and chilled monkey brains.

Like the tactile Disneylands of Florida and California, *Raiders* becomes less believable when you sidle up close to it. Video's intimacy substantially reduces the movie's epic quotient, and even John Williams' bombastic score sounds flat and diminished. The film runs down after the first ten minutes—an exciting yet unlikely chase scene takes the trio out windows, through awnings, down crowded streets, from a flying plane, down a mountainside, over rapids, and off a cliff. After a dull hour and a half, Spielberg reawakens us with yet another roller-coaster ride toward the end.

Spielberg and George Lucas claim merely to be paying homage to the action-adventure serials of their youth. What they've proven, however, is that nothing has really changed during the past 20 or 30 years: middle-aged white males still dominate our fantasies as they dominate our lives. —Richard Gehl

THE CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR

1986. Daryl Hannah, Pamela Reed, James Remar; dir. Michael Chapman. 100m. (R) Hi St cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: excel.

This is a terrible, sexist thing to say,

but there's a scene in *The Clan of the Cave Bear* where Daryl Hannah's Neanderthal associates encounter another tribe whose women walk around bare-chested and all you can think is, "Gosh, I wish Daryl belonged to *their* clan!"

Is this a cloddish reaction to the marketing of this caveman epic as a powerful feminist allegory? No. However heavy *that* concept lies on top of this picture, at least the notion of Hannah's Ayla character as the first woman-survivor is valid within the plot's framework. As an orphaned Cro-Magnon reluctantly taken in by a band of nomadic Neanderthals, Ayla so clearly has the evolutionary jump on her benefactors (she can grunt to 20) that even her ingenuously blatant disregard for the male power structure is accommodated with token annoyance and punitive measures that are, by Paleolithic standards of justice, a mere slap on the wrist.

What makes one focus on the film's superficialities is not a male-ego desire for refuge, but the most inconsistent and

The Clan of the Cave Bear



For key to headings see "Legend" on first page of "Directory."

historically ridiculous costuming since Raquel Welch's fur bikini in *One Million Years B.C.* Granted, Cro-Magnons were higher up the evolutionary ladder than Neanderthals, but does that mean they knew how to highlight their hair? How come Ayla's mother, in the fleeting glimpse of her one gets before she disappears into an earth fissure, appears to be sporting a designer leather jacket and a Fifth Avenue hair-do? And how is one supposed to react when one of the scar-faced Neanderthal women gazes pityingly at Ayla, who appears to be fresh from six hours in the beauty cave, and sadly intones, "Ayla is so ugly. She'll never have a mate."

The Clan of the Cave Bear is entertaining, often visually beautiful, and even, at times, touching. But so was *Nikki, Wild Dog of the North*. With a screenplay by John Sayles (*Return of the Secaucus Seven*), one is tempted to consider this a subtle parody of the cave-film genre or even Jean M. Auel's bestseller on which the film was based. But to that end, it would have been better to do *Chariots of the Bears*, exploring the premise of aliens leaving a box of Clairol in the cave before going off to build Stonehenge.

—John Walker

9 1/2 WEEKS

1986. Mickey Rourke, Kim Basinger; dir. Adrian Lyne. 116m. (R) Hi D St \$79.95. MGM/UA. Image: excel.

Boy meets girl. Boy gets girl. Boy loses girl. Big deal? So you would think judging from the outrage that greeted this film when it appeared in theaters earlier this year. Advance word promised graphic sex and an unhealthy dose of kinky domination games. To some extent, *9 1/2 Weeks* delivered; that the con-

troversy died so quickly, however, reflects this uninvolved movie's ineptitude.

Kim Basinger plays a gorgeous blonde divorcee who works in a trendy New York art gallery. Mickey Rourke is a self-satisfied arbitrageur who lives in a classy high-tech designer apartment. His achievement is the fantasy of every Wall Street schlub, especially once he acquires Kim. At first, he takes good care of his new toy, buying her pretty dresses and feeding her yummy dinners. But when he gets bored the games he plays get a little rough. The film is billed as "a love story," which is accurate enough—it's all about Mickey's love for his possessions.

You'll have to forgive me for referring to the two leads as "Mickey" and "Kim," but I honestly can't remember the surnameless names of their characters. Director Lyne doesn't ask them to play characters anyway; they're identified by careers, appearance, clothes, and apartments. In Mickey's most revealing moment he claims to support his parents—another relationship defined by money. The only acting required from Basinger is to pout and let her mascara run when her boyfriend starts getting really slimy. The monotony of Basinger's performance is all the more disheartening in light of the stories that initially filtered off the set of this fiasco. Both Lyne and Rourke reportedly abused and manipulated Basinger; she claims they pushed her to the "edge of terror." The result is a leaden performance from a usually spunky actress.

To be sure, *9 1/2 Weeks* pokes at some sensitive sexual and emotional issues. Why does Mickey find dominance and sadism so stimulating, and is this the only way he knows how to love a woman?

Does Kim get off on this abuse, and if not, why does she put up with it? Such questions go unanswered—Lyne merely uses these provocative issues as the framework for a long, glossy music video. The sex scenes are pretty steamy (but not graphic) and effective, but otherwise it's impossible not to see Mickey as a manipulative creep and Kim as a whimpering airhead. Between them they've got all the wit and charm of a drainpipe—given the physical attractiveness of his two stars, it's amazing how unappealing Lyne manages to make them.

Essentially, *9 1/2 Weeks* is high-gloss soft porn for yuppies too self-conscious to rent *Deep Throat*. Basinger fans may be willing to endure the insipid plot and dialogue as the price of getting to gaze at her for two hours. More likely, some will fast-forward between the racier scenes. That may be the only way to salvage this boring, superficial movie about two boring, superficial people.

P.S. The scene added for the video release is no biggie. —Louis Kesten

PRETTY IN PINK

1986. Molly Ringwald, Jon Cryer, Andrew McCarthy; dir. Howard Deutch; wr. John Hughes. 97m. (PG-13) Hi St cc \$79.95. MCA. Image: excel.

John Hughes, the reigning king of high school reality pictures, doesn't overload his work with involved plot twists, non-stop action, incidental characters, or exotic settings. In other words, very little ever happens. The young heroes in his cinematic sketches simply confront believable, potentially universal problems, grapple with them, and emerge wiser, stronger, and happier. What makes the films popular, especially with teens, is their style: Hughes strives to catch the audience's lingo, emotional concerns, tastes, attitudes, and music.

Despite the always-alluring presence of Molly Ringwald, a riveting (if unbearably hammy) performance by Jon Cryer as a young mixture of Woody Allen and Bruce Willis, and brilliant character turns by Harry Dean Stanton and Annie Potts, *Pretty in Pink* doesn't work. The simple story, which interweaves class prejudice and a familiar boy-girl-buddy triangle, takes place in shorthand; there are cute/funny bits and several pointed emotional exchanges, but the film skips the details and the passion, and never develops any momentum or energy. The most exciting component is the title song by the Psychedelic Furs, a 1981 single re-recorded and used several times.

Pretty in Pink is essentially about unattainable desires. Andie (Ringwald), a girl literally from the wrong side of the tracks, needs a date for the prom and a job for her despondent dad (Stanton).





Pretty in Pink

Lovable nut Duckie (Cryer), her devoted longtime friend in poverty, wants more than her friendship. Rich wuss Blane (McCarthy) wants to date Andie and keep the respect of his class-conscious peers. Blane and Andie go out; Duckie is crushed. After popping the prom question, Blane is pressured by his slimeball friend (who has a personal grudge) to dump her, which he does without a moment's contemplation. Determined not to fold, she makes a pink dress and goes solo to the prom, where things are resolved faster'n you can say Ferris Bueller.

The characters proceed like kites in a breeze—personality inconsistencies and exaggerations abound. None of the principals are especially believable, Andie

least of all. If she and Duckie have been daily companions for eight years, why would she still find his incessant antics surprising and obnoxious? How could she be blithely ignorant of his romantic feelings which are no secret to anyone else? Her bland indecision (about the prom, Blane, and the desirability of being accepted) also seems arbitrary, ruled mostly by the story's convenience. Further, the class strife which seems to be the film's *raison d'être* is dubious: the girls who hate Andie seem mostly affronted by her funky fashions; Blane's friend's maliciousness results from her snubbing him, not social standing.

Good intentions and fine acting notwithstanding, *Pretty in Pink* is all dressed up with nothing to say.

—Ira Robbins

RUNAWAY TRAIN

1985. Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, Rebecca DeMornay; dir. Andrei Konchalovsky. 112m. (R) Hi St cc \$79.95. MGM/UA. Image: good.

Right from the get-go, Manny (Voight) warns Buck (Roberts) that he's "at war with the world and everyone in it, and you're gonna get hurt!" Manny and Buck, a pair of hard-nosed homicidal bruisers, escape from a maximum-security prison in Alaska only to hop aboard four linked locomotives whose engineer immediately dies of a heart attack, leaving them barreling through the snowy countryside at 80-plus m.p.h. "Boy, I guess you guys picked the wrong train," deadpans a rail worker (DeMornay), the juggernaut's only other passenger.

The film begins in the prison, where a court order releases Manny from solitary confinement, much to the consternation of his arch enemy, Chief Guard Ranken

(John P. Ryan). Ranken is easily identified as Manny's authority-figure counterpart; their physical resemblance is unmistakable. The prison itself seems to consist of a single claustrophobic set, so the visual release is striking when the action shifts to the power and inevitability of the train's trajectory across the great white north.

Manny is tough as trains himself, and the younger Buck idolizes him. The two are as out-of-control as the train, and Voight and Roberts provide all the angry, amoral emotion you'd ever want to see. Voight pitches his role (for which he received an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor) at high-level pathos; yammering on and on, Roberts (nominated for Best Supporting Actor) seems determined to out-act Voight. Between the two of them, you get more than enough acting for your video dollar.

As the train becomes another prison, they play out the ever-popular men-as-animals scenario. "You're a beast!" screams DeMornay at Voight, to which he sensibly replies, "No. Worse. Human!" The parallel completes itself when Ranken drops in on the convicts via helicopter.

Could this have been what director Akira Kurosawa had in mind when he wrote the screenplay on which the film is based? Maybe so. The two scenery-chewers do employ a certain Japanese acting style—an explosive, angry attitude found only in capital-A acting. As in the case of his last film (*Maria's Lovers*), director Andrei Konchalovsky again seeks degree-zero passion, and just misses finding it.

—Richard Gehrt

THE MONEY PIT

1986. Tom Hanks, Shelley Long, Alexander Godunov; dir. Richard Benjamin. (PG) Hi St ss \$79.95. MCA. Image: good.

No, Tom Hanks isn't the new Cary Grant. For that matter, Shelley Long isn't the new Rosalind Russell, either. Nonetheless, they are two of the most appealing comic actors around, and the chemistry between them is the foundation of this amiable farce directed by veteran comic actor Richard Benjamin. Hanks and Long play Walter and Anna, an upwardly-mobile unmarried couple who buy a huge suburban house for \$200,000 from a woman whose husband is being extradited. ("You think you know somebody after 25 years," Maureen Stapleton opines, "then Israeli intelligence comes to the door.") Of course, there's a lot more wrong with the house than that, and the resulting chaos is like a cross between *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House* and *The Amityville Horror*. Slime spits out of the plumb-



ing, the roof leaks, wiring explodes, the staircase collapses, ceilings buckle, and walls topple. Actually more suspenseful than many slasher movies, there's no telling what horrors will visit Walter and Anna next. A crew of plumbers and carpenters move in, but they seem to do more harm than good. The climax—a Rube Goldberg-inspired slapstick sequence—begins with Anna plugging in a percolator and ends in major destruction.

As the house begins to come together, the lovers' relationship deteriorates, and Hanks and Long really come to life as Benjamin lets the characters go at each other. When Anna thinks she may have slept with her ex (she was drunk and doesn't remember), Walter goes mad with jealousy. Hanks has a great face for expressing wounded bewilderment, and his voice suddenly gets high-pitched, like he's just been kicked in the crotch. And Long, who's had plenty of experience in this kind of scene with Ted Danson in *Cheers*, coils with nervous energy, ridden with guilt but angry because Walter can't forgive her.

The supporting cast is terrific: Stapleton, Josh Mostel as a sleazy real-estate agent, Philip Bosco and Joe Mantegna as the cut-rate contractors, and, believe it or not, guitarist Leslie West as a transvestite rocker. Alexander Godunov is a comic revelation, playing Anna's egotistical, amoral ex-husband with just the right amount of self-satisfied ooze.

The Money Pit isn't side-splitting or particularly insightful, but it's pleasant enough and mercifully free of the bombast and pretension of other Steven Spielberg productions. Hanks and Long are utterly charming; his boyish, flippant wit nicely complements her calmer but more cutting delivery. Tracy and Hepburn, no, but it'll be nice to see future vehicles for them. —Louis Kesten

The Money Pit



Sleeping Beauty

SLEEPING BEAUTY

1958. Anim. Dir. Clyde Geronimi. 75m. (G) Hi St cc \$29.95. Disney. Image: good.

Fairytales are more than kid stuff. Sociologists say they are society's way of conveying values to children in the guise of entertainment. This tale of true love awakened by a kiss is designed to immerse the little critters in the mysticism of romance before biology steps in to corrupt them—a perfect Disney conceit. Amplifying the love story is the classic good-vs.-evil battle of all good pop entertainment: before prince and princess may wed, the bridegroom must defeat the bad witch, Maleficent. According to Disney, the heroes of the confrontation are not the charming prince or the sleeping beauty, but their allies, a trio of color-coded fairies.

Color is an emotional and symbolic determinant in *Sleeping Beauty's* visual scheme. What videophile worth his salt could resist an animated tale in which three major characters are tinted red, green, and blue? The red/pink fairy, Flora, bestows the gift of beauty on the infant princess; red and pink become the colors of her lips and face as she lies in repose, waiting for the kiss of life. The green fairy, Fauna, bestows the gift of song. The blue fairy, Merryweather, casts a spell to temper Maleficent's curse of death on the princess' 16th birthday to mere sleep; dark blue lines Maleficent's black cloak, and blue and black dominate the battle scene. Thus Disney color-coded an idealized vision of life: Red equals beauty and the mystic power of love. Green equals song and courtship and the call of love. Blue equals moral struggle and the price of love.

Sleeping Beauty has attracted few laurels from students of animation, possibly because they overlook Walt's elaborate framework to focus upon the drab mer-

chandise hung on it. The ostensible male and female leads are dull and stereotypical-looking; the whole production looks more like Hanna-Barbera than vintage Disney. Yet Disney's vestigial virtuosity shows through in the three-dimensionality of his multiplane technique (pioneered with "The Old Mill" in 1937). The battle scene is exciting in all its kinetic proto-Spielberg turbulence.

Even no-frills Disney has its charms. If your eyes get bored, you can always use your brain to theorize about the color scheme. —Mark Fleischmann

TARGET

1985. Gene Hackman, Matt Dillon, Josef Sommer; dir. Arthur Penn. 117m. (R) Hi St cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: excel.

As a couple du cinema, Gene Hackman and Arthur Penn have a proven ability to nail the elements of elusive relationships. In both *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Night Moves*, Hackman has warmed up Penn's cold gaze at humanity to impressive effect. With *Target*, Hackman does his best to maintain that control. Unfortunately, director Penn seems like the proverbial show-off at the carnival shooting gallery, scoring a bullseye with his first shot but squandering the rest of his money with nary a nick of a duck's head to show for it.

Target's story is built on an impressive foundation of characters: extremely dull middle-aged businessman Walter Lloyd (Hackman) passively sends his wife off on a solo tour of Europe, to the chagrin of their teenage son Chris (Dillon), who is clearly bored to tears by the prospect of spending time alone with his tedious pop. Then word comes that Donna Lloyd has mysteriously vanished from her tour group. Chris virtually has to kick pop's derriere to get him to act on the situation. For the first time in 17 years, Walter boards an airplane at son-point.

The two haven't been on foreign soil for ten minutes before the plot twists spectacularly, the upshot being that dull dad is really a former CIA spook and his wife has been kidnapped because of a Cold War vendetta. Splendid concept—and what do they do? Run it into the bedrock of Europe. With all this intricate groundwork, *Target* is transposed into a run-of-the-mill action/adventure exercise replete with improbable shoot-outs, chase scenes, dumb tail-men, and sexy double agents. Father and son's redefined relationship is suddenly reduced to patting each other on the back for ballsy behavior. Even the burgeoning potential of Chris' exploration of dad's complex past is stunted by the squeal of tires, gunshots, and Dillon's New Jersey accent (his character lives in Dallas).

Target is never dull, but as its IQ steadily drops one wonders whether Penn failed to assimilate the genre, or whether it was assimilated for him by a bunch of Hollywood cigar chompers. Oh, well...congratulations, Arthur, at least you win an ash-tray. —John Walker

MARNIE

1964. Tippi Hedren, Sean Connery, Diane Baker; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. 130m. (PG) Hi \$59.95. MCA. Image: good.

Time to choose up sides—the film that has long divided Hitchcock admirers into armed camps is finally available for video inspection. Frame by bewilderingly artificial frame, *Marnie* yields its controversial treasures, from too-painterly exterior shots to giddily steamy closeups. The story goes that Hitchcock had fallen in unrequited love with Tippi Hedren—a blonde in the Grace Kelly tradition—and when he couldn't recreate his onscreen fantasy in real life lost interest in the work in progress. The final weeks of shooting were excruciating and the final result sloppy. Film historians strain to explain away the film's distracting technical shortcomings—especially the cheap wallpaper that passes for outdoor scenery.

The movie is almost an amalgam of Hitchcock's previous work. Marnie (Hedren) is a mother-fixated compulsive thief, a combination of *Psycho*'s Norman and Marion. She falls into the hands of sympathetic but domineering Mark Rutland (Connery), whose headstrong behavior recalls virtually every character James Stewart ever played for Hitchcock. He tries to psychoanalyze her out of her misery—shades of *Spellbound*. *Notorious* contributes the water imagery and even specific visual quotes, like the crane shots in both films' party sequences.

What's different—and a little scary—is the air of predatory sexuality. *Marnie* may well be one of the most blatantly



Marnie

spectacular cases of sexual harassment in Hollywood history. Hedren's performance—intense, hysterical—may have been the only sane reaction to the ordeal she was enduring.

Real eroticism in an unreal framework makes *Marnie* the great geek of cinema. The film is far from the incongruous flop its most severe critics allege—it's incredibly involving, albeit for all the wrong reasons. More than *Notorious* or even *Rear Window*, *Marnie* awakens the voyeur in us all—and makes us feel stupid and degraded in the process. *Marnie* is Hitchcock at his most pornographically emotional. —Mark Fleischmann

BLISS

1986. Barry Otto, Lynette Curran, Helen Jones; dir. Ray Lawrence. 112m. (R) \$79.95. New World. Image: good.

The title evokes thoughts of Krishna devotees prancing down the sidewalk in wide-eyed glee. The topic of spiritual happiness has for some time seemed far too precious for serious contemplation. Nevertheless, Australian Ray Lawrence has plunged into this lonely territory, demanding that both his protagonist—the aptly named Harry Joy (Otto)—and audience struggle with what, since Aristotle's day, has been The Big One of ethical questions: How should I live?

Bliss is as difficult to describe as it is enjoyable to watch. One afternoon, after a pleasant birthday lunch with his family and friends, successful advertising executive Harry Joy buys the farm. For the next four minutes, he watches his prostrate body, then makes a quick trip through heaven and hell, pleasure and pain, before willing himself back to life with the help of the local paramedics. Harry is irrevocably changed, and vows

to "be good" from that day forward. Nobody makes it easy for the guy, though. His wife (Curran) is having an affair with his partner; his son sells cocaine and is committing incest with his sister.

Harry's redemption arrives in the form of a hippie prostitute from the outback, Honey Barbara (Jones), who entices him to join her in a return to nature. Although Harry slides back into the temporal realm, losing Honey Barbara briefly in the process, he does finally turn his back on the modern world. The film's final moments tell one of the cinema's most beautiful love stories.

Bliss proceeds in a languid, trancelike way, episode following episode like pieces of dreams. Lawrence's camera wanders through rooms and forests like a sleepwalking Karl Jung, setting off metal and glass against paradises of greenery. Thoughtful and slightly surreal, the world Lawrence unfurls resembles something out of J. G. Ballard's later novels, a place just the other side of original sin, lush and slightly overripe. Even while Lawrence's meditation on bliss sometimes slops over into Herman Hesse territory, the dialectic's on the mark far more often than not.

—Richard Gehr

THAT WAS THEN... THIS IS NOW

1985. Emilio Estevez, Craig Sheffer, Kim Delaney; dir. Christopher Cain. 103m. (R) St cc \$79.95. LV St CX cc \$29.95. Paramount. Image: good.

Growing up is never easy, but for the confused, inarticulate teens of *That Was Then... This Is Now*, it's pure hell. Virtually abandoned by their elders, the poor kids in this dreary drama stagger from one grim situation to another, with only the vaguest comprehension of what's happening. Unfortunately, the film is so dull it's hard to feel much concern for them.

Joining *Tex*, *The Outsiders*, and *Rumble Fish*, *That Was Then* is the fourth S.E. Hinton novel to be adapted for the screen. Unlike the previous three, it does without Matt Dillon, starring instead Emilio Estevez, who also wrote the screenplay. With his piercing gaze and edgy voice, Estevez can be a compelling performer, but his script is D.O.A.

In fairness, Hinton's turgid story doesn't offer much to work with. Orphan Mark (Estevez) lives with Bryon (Sheffer) and his mom (Barbara Babcock) on the poor side of town. Although the guys have been best buddies for years, their friendship's heading for the rocks. Handsome Bryon is maturing: he's taken a job bagging groceries at the local market and prefers to spend much of his free time with new girlfriend Cathy (Delaney).

Mark desperately wants to remain a high-spirited delinquent, stealing cars and getting into fights in the school parking lot. He's hurt and bewildered that his pal no longer finds these activities exciting.

Thus proceeds the familiar rebel-without-a-cause tale, as Mark jealously tries to hold Bryon's attention in the face of inevitable change. Predictably, the two clash, split, and finally reconcile, both sadder but wiser. The tired plot machinations are sparked only by the sometimes startlingly inappropriate responses of the characters. When Cathy's little brother disappears, she and Bryon evince mild concern, deciding to search for the troubled youngster only after they get off work. When Bryon discovers Mark's been pushing pills, he throws him out into the street, a severe overreaction considering what's come before. Of course, if he hadn't, the movie would've lacked a climax.

In keeping with the flat dialogue, *That Was Then... This Is Now* is visually unimaginative, whether the subject is a deserted moonlit street or a close-up of one of the attractive stars. On the brighter side, the tape transfer faithfully captures all the nuances of this forgettable film.

—Jon Young

KENNETH ANGER MAGICK LANTERN CYCLE

Volume 1: *Fireworks* (1947. B&W. 14m.). *Rabbit's Moon* (1950. B&W. 7m.). *Eaux d'Artifice* (1953. B&W. 13m.).

Volume 2: *The Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* (1954. 38m.).

Volume 3: *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (1965. 3m.). *Puce Moment* (1949. 6m.). *Scorpio Rising* (1963. 28m.).

Volume 4: *Invocation of My Demon Brother* (1969. 11m.). *Lucifer Rising* (1970-1980. 28m.). \$50 ea. *Mystic Fire* (24 Horatio St. #3, New York, N.Y. 10014). Image: excellent.

Kenneth Anger—scandalmonger, avant-garde filmmaker, occultist, author of *Hollywood Babylon*—has been a cult figure since the Fifties. As such, he's been over-acclaimed, under-recognized, and generally mythologized to an extent that his own mother wouldn't know him. *The Magick Lantern Cycle*, a four-tape complete anthology of (according to the extensive package notes) Anger's extant films, cuts through the hype to reveal Anger the director as a deft manipulator of sound and image.

It would probably anger Anger to be regarded in such vernacular terms, but these tapes are like the ultimate (and original) rock videos. With musical soundtracks—from the Parris Sisters to Janacek—and no dialogue, Anger's films



The Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome

present—decades before Duran Duran—the symbiotic relationship between music and fetishist tactile images. All the films have plots, but the flow of the action is always secondary to the images themselves. At their best, the films imply their message by irony: putting for example, Little Peggy March's childlike "Wind Up Doll" behind footage of a hood assembling his motorcycle. Many of the films are suggestively homoerotic; others suggest violence not through violent actions but through totems. The films establish their own code of communication, calling into question the "meaning" of things otherwise taken for granted. You haven't heard Bobby Vinton sing "She wore blue velvet" until you've seen it used as the soundtrack for closeups of studs buttoning their leather pants (from *Scorpio Rising*). Nor understood the male relationship with cars until you've considered it entirely afunctionally, as pure fetish (*Kustom Kar Kommandos*).

You can buy the package in a boxed set, or each tape separately; at \$50 for under 40 minutes (no discount for buying the set, although you do get the numbered box and a dense monograph), sampling the tapes one at a time seems advisable. In toto, though, you can watch Anger develop, shift his fixations from Eros to Lucifer, and lose his focus in a swell of uncomprehending ambition.

Volume 1 offers three early tinted black-and-white shorts: *Fireworks*, *Eaux d'Artifice*, and *Rabbit's Moon*. The first is the most vivid, a startlingly bold erotic dream sequence which plays on the dual myths of the sailor as protector and threat. The film literally explodes at its, um, climax—fireworks erupt from the sailor's fly.

The second tape consists entirely of

Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome, which shows both the director's budding interest in the occult writings of Aleister Crowley (to whom it is dedicated) and his ability to make images overlap and fight each other to his advantage. The film concerns a gathering of magicians in a Dionysian rite—that otherwise almost indiscernible summation again courtesy of the notes—but makes its strongest impact as a Fellini-esque costume party involving progressively more richly bizarre characters.

If you buy only one Kenneth Anger tape this year, make it Volume 3. Sensuality and danger mingle in a mesmerizingly evocative look at man and his fetishes, set to a soundtrack of ironically manipulated '50s rock 'n' roll. *Kustom Kar Kommandos* puts today's video to shame with a voyeuristic look at a tight-jeaned man polishing his metal-and-chrome mean machine with a feathery puff, as the Parris Sisters declare their affection breathily. *Scorpio Rising* is unquestionably Anger's masterpiece, a bold work about homosexuality and macho brutality. It powerfully delves into the apocalyptic subtext of America's prized myths and, by extension, our national character—all in under half an hour.

By 1969, Anger made peace with the trends of the day and his psychedelic *Invocation of My Demon Brother*, featuring a corny synthesizer tape loop by Mick Jagger, is little more than a hippie cliché. *Lucifer Rising*, his most ambitious (and unfinished) movie seems dated in a way that his earlier films don't.

The four tapes are consistently stimulating. *Mystic Fire* deserves credit for absolutely pristine transfers and excellent packaging, and criticism for stretching under 160 minutes of programming onto four tapes.

—John Leland

QUICK TAKES ON FILMS

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

1985. *Walter Matthau, Charles Grodin, Bill Macy; dir. William Asher. 80m. (PG) Hi St \$79.95. MGM/UA. Image: good.*

Hollywood hypocrisy is harpooned in this well-intentioned but weak-kneed little film written by Grodin. A sentimental studio head (Matthau) promises a dying producer that he will make "an important film" for a change. The property he agrees to tackle is the title of a marriage manual, *Love in Sex*, which he hopes will inspire "a movie that celebrates love, relationships, marriage"—with "no positions." Predictably, both the neurotic writer (Grodin) and crazy director (Macy) he hires are in ridiculously lousy relationships themselves. Grodin's low-key irony is almost insidious enough to hold our interest, but the film's high point is a short visit to fading swashbuckler Fabio Longio (Steve Martin).

—Richard Gehr

MAXIE

1985. *Glenn Close, Mandy Patinkin, Ruth Gordon; dir. Paul Aaron. 98m. (PG) Hi \$79.95. Thorn. Image: good.*

This lighthearted romantic comedy is about a straitlaced private secretary (Close) who works for a harried bishop (Barnard Hughes) in San Francisco. Given today's loose morals that might be promising, but unfortunately there's more. The irritatingly earnest secretary becomes possessed by the spirit of a raucous flapper/silent screen actress. The mystery of this occurrence is resolved when Maxie Malone's old dance partner (Gordon) explains that her friend died en route to becoming a movie star; Maxie wants to finally win her fame in Hollywood. The screwball plot's machinations are sickeningly sweet; directed like a TV movie, *Maxie* has all kinds of irrelevant flourishes, including a comic sub-plot parodying *The Exorcist*. This is the type of movie that makes you resent the headphone rental fee, even on a long flight.

—Matthew Pimm

THE GIG

1985. *Wayne Rogers, Cleavon Little, Warren Vache, Joe Silver; wr./dir. Frank D. Gilroy. 85m. \$79.95. Image: good.*

This tale of six amateur jazz musicians who finally get a chance to play at a Cat-skills resort is one of those small pictures that surprise you. Rogers, as the used car dealer-cum-bandleader, Little as the



ringer brought in when their regular bassman falls ill, Silver as the resort owner, and the supporting cast (especially Andrew Duncan, Jerry Matz, and Daniel Nalbach) are all wonderfully apt. Gilroy's script and direction continually uncover new twists. A nice character study and good fun, despite the slightly rushed ending.

—M. George Stevenson

THE SURVIVOR

1980. *Robert Powell, Jenny Agutter, Joseph Cotten; dir. David Hemmings. 91m. \$59.95. Karl. Image: good.*

The concept of Australia as purgatory is nothing new; ask any Australian. *The Survivor*, however, is one of the first films to take a literal approach to such an analogy as it dissects the tense aftermath of a spectacular 747 jet crash and turns up a number of otherworldly elements. Imagine *Fate Is the Hunter* with a ghost in it and you'll have a general idea of what *The Survivor* is like. Powell and Agutter are reasonably anxious as, respectively, the pilot who alone survived and a psychic school-marm who feels compelled to help untwist some mighty tangled wreckage. Director David Hemmings doesn't rush to any conclusions, so put your seat back for this one.

—John Walker

ALWAYS

1985. *Henry Jaglom, Patrice Townsend; dir. Jaglom. 106m. (R) cc \$79.95. Vestron. Image: excel.*

Henry Jaglom's semi-autobiographical

film about the breakup of his marriage with co-star Patrice Townsend is beautiful, excruciating, honest, and annoying. The ostensible plot has her visiting their former home to sign divorce papers, only to find he has invited close friends and family for a weekend of weird encounter-group partying. This luxury blimp to nowhere picks up speed when (*My Dinner with*) Andre Gregory and Michael Emil (star of Jaglom's *But Can She Bake a Cherry Pie*) arrive to amuse and bewilder an expanded array of guests. Jaglom is at his best when arranging montages with large ensembles, at his worst one-on-one.

—Mark Fleischmann

THIS MAN MUST DIE

1970. *Michel Duchaussoy, Caroline Cellier, Jean Yanne; dir. Claude Chabrol. 112m. (PG) Hi \$59.98. Key Image: poor.*

A writer obsessively seeks to revenge his young son's death under the wheels of a hit-and-run driver—who turns out to be the most evil father in the world—in this modern tragedy with classical overtones. Though this intellectual suspense story (house guests discuss the French New Novel over cocktails) is propelled by a single unlikely coincidence, Chabrol's Hitchcockian moves, dour atmosphere, and blonde centerpiece (Cellier) are interesting enough once a certain momentum is established. Unfortunately, the transfer demolishes Chabrol's subtle settings and most intimate conversations.

—Richard Gehr

A JOKE OF DESTINY

1985. *Ugo Tognazzi, Piera Degli Esposti; dir. Lina Wertmuller. 105m. (PG) \$59.95. Karl. Image: good.*

Lina Wertmuller used to exhibit, in such films as *Seven Beauties*, political audacity and visual panache. Now her main accomplishment seems to be long, pretentious titles. (This film's entire name translates as *A Joke of Destiny Waiting Around the Corner Like a Bandit*.) After an optimistically poetic prologue, a Minister of the Interior becomes trapped in his armored car and spends the rest of the film in the garage of a Member of Parliament he happens to despise. As various zany officials attempt to dislodge him, we get bits about the MP's wife (a feminist revolutionary), his mother-in-law (a pothead), his daughter (wants a policeman to deflower her), the singing gardener, and so on. Dippy surrealism.

—Richard Gehr

VIDEOS

MADE FOR HOME VIEWING



Max Headroom

MAX HEADROOM

1985. Matt Frewer, Nickolas Grace, Amanda Pays, Paul Spurrier: dir. Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel. 57m. \$29.95. Karl. Image: good.

Television's newest overnight sensation, Max Headroom, seemed to emerge from the ether, arriving on these shores from Great Britain with a plum deal to do Coke commercials, a national cable show on Cinemax, and more press coverage than the last royal wedding. Just who is this self-amused two-dimensional (literally) jerk with the 200-watt teeth and the veneer of a smarmy funeral director?

Calling Max artificial is more truth than insult: England's Channel Four network invented him—by covering Canadian actor Matt Frewer with computer animation and other treatments—as a media icon to ridicule American television personalities and culture. (That Max was so easily corrupted by Madison Ave. only validates the lampoon's realism.) Given a music video show to host, Max proved the ultimate pop-star interrogator, asking unthinkable obtuse questions no one with a corporeal presence and a glimmer of shame would ever voice.

Max was introduced via this nifty science fiction pilot, set “20 minutes into the future,” which cleverly explains how he came to exist. The greedy bosses of Network XXIII have discovered that their “blipverts”—30-second ads compressed into 3 seconds—are causing couch potatoes to spontaneously deto-

nate. Unfortunately for them, so has ace field reporter Edison Carter (Frewer), who sets out to unravel the story. While escaping the thugs dispatched to dispatch him, Carter drives through a barricade marked “Max. Headroom 2.3m” and winds up in the evil clutches of young Bryce Lynch (Spurrier), the network's techie genius. Lynch plans to ice Carter after programming his likeness and memory into a computer, but a botched translation yields Max instead. The machine electronically containing him ends up in the possession of a crummy pirate TV station, which blithely puts the glib anchorman on the air. Alan Thicke, are you watching?

Displaying scathing *Network*-like satire and settings that mix *Brazil* and *Blade Runner*, *Max Headroom* has an inventive graphic look that layers Handycam TV pictures, computer animation, data fields, and more. As a means to introduce an end, it functions seamlessly; as intelligent video drama, it's even better.

—Ira Robbins

PICASSO THE MAN AND HIS WORK

1986. B&W/color. Pr./dir. Edward Quinn. 2 cas. 45m. ea. Hi \$39.95 ea. VIEW (34 East 23 St., New York, N.Y. 10010). Image: good.

Don't mistake this for *The Mystery of Picasso*, Henri-Georges Clouzot's 1955 film which had a belated run on the art house circuit this year. That documentary showed Picasso creating art before the camera's eye. *The Man and His Work* deals with what he produced—which, as anyone knows, is a lot—and complements the other. This long slideshow gallery tour is punctuated by photographs and candid footage shot during Picasso's last years in the south of France.

Picasso lived from 1881 to 1973 and worked until the day he died, changing styles many times. The consistency is in his penetrating gaze straight into the camera. Oddly enough, the home movie excerpts provide just the opposite of the intimacy they're after. Picasso is gracious as he looks through catalogues of his work or snacks with guests, but what one senses is that he'd just as soon get back to work.

You can rewind from the Pink Period to the Blue Period, or zip ahead to Picasso's subsequent bouts with Analytic Cubism, Synthetic Cubism, and Monumental

Neoclassicism, pausing to take in the landmark paintings: “Absinthe Drinkers,” “Family of Jugglers,” “Guernica.”

Commentary on the over 600 works displayed is most useful when it consists of reminiscences by Picasso's contemporaries. Too much of it is fatuous art drool. (“He had to throw on his paper what was in his mind and heart.”) And the overlong introductory section of fulsome praise for Picasso's widow Jacqueline (“She was not only an attentive wife but an enthusiastic pupil”) seems embarrassingly sycophantic. Still, we'd put up with as much to have caught an equivalent glimpse of Rembrandt, Rubens, or Titian. The documentary value of this issue, even with the perhaps inevitable distortion of Picasso's colors, is inarguable.

(The two tapes are also available in a boxed “gift edition” for \$79.95.)

—Kathy Huffhines



Picasso The Man and His Work

LEARNING BRIDGE THE RIGHT WAY, VOLUMES I, II

1986. Lee Henry. 60m. ea. \$19.95 ea. Embassy. Image: good.

PLAY BRIDGE WITH OMAR SHARIF

1986. Omar Sharif, Dorothy Hayden Truscott. 55m. \$39.95. Best Film & Video (98 Cutter Mill Rd., Great Neck, N.Y. 11021; 516-487-4515). Image: good.

“You don't have to exercise a lot of brain power,” says host Lee Henry at the start of *Learning Bridge the Right Way*. Well, maybe he doesn't. But bridge beginners must disagree; no card game is more intellectually challenging. Luckily, Henry has a gift for making the intricacies

of the game easy to grasp.

He tackles fundamentals first: how to determine the dealer, the value of different cards, how to sort the cards in a hand. Henry soon has us playing what might be called "pre-bridge" to confirm the basics. He guides us through the techniques of finessing and roughing with admirable, if sometimes tedious, clarity. Volume I concludes with an explanation of scoring and a sketch of bidding, illustrated by on-screen displays of the players' cards.

The sketch lays the groundwork for Volume II, which explores bidding in enough detail to satisfy beginning-to-intermediate players. Henry shows us a variation of Charles Goren's method for estimating the value of a hand and teaches how to use that method for effective bidding. Like the other lessons here, Henry's bidding instructions are thoughtfully chosen and easy to follow.

The same cannot be said for *Play Bridge with Omar Sharif*, which is aimed at well-versed players and makes no concessions to those with less experience. Don't tangle with this video unless the Blackwood and Stayman conventions are familiar; Omar assumes we know them and offers no hint to the uninitiated.

Sharif, a mere prop here, serves as the dummy in every hand and occasionally adds bland, apologetic non-humor. Sharif breaks out of his rut only to invite us to guess from his bidding which of four hands he holds. The prize Omar offers is a two-week, bridge-playing cruise with him. Some prize.

The real host of *Play Bridge with Omar Sharif* is Dorothy Hayden Truscott, an intimidatingly excellent player. She talks us through 15 hands, but her knowledge of the game is so thorough she leaves less-skilled viewers eating dust. Such talent makes for a superb tournament competitor, not a good bridge instructor. —Andrew Roblin

SVENGALI

1983. Peter O'Toole, Jodie Foster, Elizabeth Ashley; dir. Anthony Harvey. 96m. \$39.95. U.S.A. Image: good.

In the realm of good-bad—the sublimely hokey, the high camp—there are givens. A classic must have a pretentious high concept, a cliché-per-minute density equal to a Care Bears special, and big stars. Moreover, these stars must *know* they're involved in utter absurdity yet remain totally serious. A tall order, but *Svengali* qualifies in spades.

First, it has Peter O'Toole (almost a high-camp signifier by himself) as a very old world Hungarian vocal coach. It has Jodie Foster as an aspiring rock star discovered by Elizabeth Ashley and sent to O'Toole for lessons. (Forget that neither of them can sing in anything other than a



Svengali

Rex Harrison sort of musical talking.) Without ever bothering to form a proper vowel between them, Jodie and Pete solve the singing problem and fall in love.

So far so good. Add a few romantic complications—Jodie's old boyfriend, the age difference ("You're afraid of younger women!") "At my age that's all there are.")—and you have the tawdry stew necessary for high camp histrionics. You see, Jodita is so obsessed with her coach that he must be present for her to deliver the made-for-TV soft-rock ballads about "feelings." *Svengali* is his *pupil's* captive this time and, in a neat twist, must prove to her she *can* sing without him.

While as obviously a packaged commodity as any other TV movie, *Svengali* is elevated by the acting into sublime tackiness. Everything said and done has the innate surreality of *Green Acres* or *Mr. Ed*, yet the falsity is totally convincing. As Martin Balsam said in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, sure it's phony, the difference is that it's a *real* phony. So for camp lovers everywhere, I say three cheers for that. —M. George Stevenson

THE ABDUCTION OF FIGARO

1984. LeRoy Lehr, Dana Krueger, Marilyn Brustadt, Lisbeth Lloyd; Chorus, Corpse de Ballet, Minnesota Opera Orchestra. 144m. Hi St \$59.95. VAI (Box 153, Ansonia Stn., New York, N.Y. 10023). Image: excel.

One can imagine the hoopla at the University of Southern North Dakota when Prof. Peter Schickele announced the discovery of P.D.Q. Bach's full-length operatic work, *The Abduction of Figaro*.

P.D.Q. Bach, as anyone familiar with baroque music should know, is the last and least of Johann Sebastian Bach's twenty-odd children and, reportedly, "the oddest of the lot." His many works

include the *Pervertimento for Bagpipes*, *Bicycle and Balloons* and the chamber opera, *Hansel and Gretel and Ted and Alice* (one unnatural act). As anyone who's heard it can verify, *nobody* wrote music like P.D.Q.—or rather, nobody wrote it down, not if they knew what was good for them.

The Abduction of Figaro's opening scene sets the tone with the doctor's aria, "Found a Peanut." The wonderfully confused plot concerns Figaro's kidnapping by Captain Kadd, a pirate refugee from another stage play. Donald Giovannini and the servant Pecadillo go after Figaro. After that it gets too complicated to detail, but is all surrealistically enjoyable. Up to a point.

Past that point, however, Schickele's plagiaristic absurdity goes overboard. Never unamusing, he too often wears one out before punchlines, and buries some of his best gags in a plethora of bad ones. Moreover, *The Abduction of Figaro* is well over two hours long. Whew!

Still, most of the work is vintage P.D.Q. He has not slighted fanciers of strange instrumentations (including a pedal steel and electric guitar) in his score, nor disappointed those who like the eerie sound of (bargain) countertenors. Although the hiss that has plagued most of the VAI tapes I have heard is again in evidence, Schickele conducts well, and the vaunted "whole schmeer" looks very good.

—M. George Stevenson

AFRICA

1984. Wr./nar. Basil Davidson. 4 cas. 114m. \$69.95 ea. Home Vision (5547 N. Ravenswood, Chicago, Ill. 60640; 800-262-8600). Image: good.

Consider a continent engulfed in brutality and greed. Imagine that history has shown this place to be torn by war and avarice, and that religious superstition sweeps through it like a foul wind. A place where technological progress and spiritual backwardness race one another to hell. A land that exports ignorance and violence to the world. That's Europe. Now consider the case of Africa.

Home Vision's *Africa* video series arrives on the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising in South Africa. As the world waits for the Pretoria regime to fall, it's obvious Americans know precious little about Africa. Basil Davidson's admirable eight-part documentary—co-produced by Britain's Channel Four in association with the Nigerian Television Authority and released on four cassettes—is the kind of eye-opening scholarship all U.S. schoolchildren and adults should see.

In the first program, *Different but Equal*, Davidson makes the case for Africa's art, architecture, and manufacturing

proWess. He convincingly demonstrates that Africa was a respected economic partner in the classical and medieval worlds, a theme he takes up again in *Caravans of Gold*. Here he retraces the medieval routes of Africa's gold trade, stretching out to Europe, India, Asia, and China. Africa introduced the gold standard—and with it, a historic dose of economic stability—to Europe. Renaissance art documented respect for the black man in the Europe of the Enlightenment. *Mastering a Continent* shows how Africa's agrarian population has tamed the continent's inhospitable environment. *Kings and Cities*, past and present, comprise another program.

Tragedy arrives as Davidson sets the stage with his mix of moral directness and British propriety: "Early in the 16th century, Africa began to suffer the greatest calamity in its history—the steady and continual arrival of Europeans." With *The Bible and the Gun* they began the Atlantic slave trade. Another dire threat to African life came from the missionaries, who risked their lives to stamp out the African culture Davidson has so lovingly documented.

This *Magnificent African Cake* details the squalid "scramble for Africa" by various European powers. The colonialists' rearrangement of the rural economy from food crops to cash crops sowed the seeds for the famines that continue to dog Africa. *The Rise of Nationalism* would come as a relief were it not for the brutal responses of Britain to guerilla war in Kenya, France to the independence movement in Algeria, and Portugal to the national liberation struggles in Angola and Mozambique. Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and other African leaders help tell the story.

The final program, *The Legacy*, paints a picture of modern Africa—its teeming cities, modest advances, and economic relationship with a still disturbingly exploitative west. Davidson lays the blame for Africa's economic woes squarely on the effects of colonialism.

Throughout, Davidson's narration mingles with arresting footage of African life and people on every level. Archival films, maps and graphics, dramatizations at historic sites, and testimony by hard-bitten eyewitness survivors add to the impact. His on-camera demeanor is as gentlemanly as his views are humane—he is the passionate scholar, author of 30 books, not some rabid radical.

As a healing balm of knowledge to soothe the sores of Euro-American ignorance, *Africa* is a magnificent achievement. It's long, but watching it would do most of us more good than a month of the evening news. No commercials, no misinformation—just the beautiful, ugly truth.

—Mark Fleischmann



Wanted: Dead or Alive

WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE

1959, 1960. Steve McQueen. 2 cas. 22m. ea. \$19.95. ea. VidAmerica. Image: good.

The first thing a computer-colored version of TV's *Wanted: Dead or Alive* conjures up is a vision of the producers bringing the master tape (strapped belly-down across the back of some hapless burro, of course) to a mournful undertaker who assures them that he'll have their old shootin' buddy lookin' great for the funeral.

There seems to be a double-standard rising out of the use of colorization. On one hand, it seems agreed that only the most aesthetically barren cretin would deign to put a blush in the cheek of, say, the Little Tramp, whereas those who would simply gild dung like this series are let off with a mere shrug of indifference. Let's face it, they could have re-shot the damn thing in 3-D Sensurround, but if it hadn't featured superstar-to-be Steve McQueen, only your most die-hard nostalgia buffs would give a fig for its resurrection.

Even in this pro-vigilante era, the concept of a good-natured bounty hunter is kind of like a cartoon about a lovable mortician. And, ethics aside, the creative scope of this show, even at its most buoyant, is more a throw-back to the old Republic serials than an extension of the "thinking man's" westerns that flourished in the wake of the '50s. Granted, you can see McQueen's Josh Randall outwit a young and conniving Cloris Leachman and plug a young, sneering James Coburn, for which he uses his legendary "mare's leg," a firearm that makes Dirty Harry's magnum look like a pea-shooter. But how they can flog this plot-dusty horse-opera while episodes of *Sugarfoot* languish on the shelf is beyond me.

—John Walker

JOE JACKSON: BIG WORLD

1986. Dir. Bob Lampel. 25m. Hi \$19.95. A&M. Image: good.

Joe Jackson has often been unfairly compared to Elvis Costello, but their careers do share one unfortunate trait—both diffused considerable talent by exchanging initial angry-young-mannerisms for a broader palette of pop influences. When Jackson decided to be Cole Porter, he cast doubts upon the integrity of his lively, scalding punk albums. Forays into jive, jazz, and salsa seemed equally misguided, because Jackson didn't assimilate the genres, he simply pastiched them.

Big World, featuring snippets of a January '86 concert in New York City, shows Jackson gamely performing a batch of new songs in front of a gifted (if blase) band and a low-rent vocal quartet. Jackson shows occasional flashes of the spunk that made his punk so enjoyable, particularly in "Right and Wrong," a sneering critique of Reagan's simplistic view of world politics. But he actually apologizes for the "anti-American" sentiments of "Jet Set"—what kind of attitude is that for a social critic? "It's a Big World" is the embarrassing centerpiece, a lame attempt to set Jackson up as a global sophisticate.

The concert, later released on an LP (note the shots of guys at the mixing board), is less a gig than a recording session, with little spontaneity. The camera doesn't catch much you can't hear on the album, except for some awkward, quickly terminated dancing by Jackson. He seems content to be a glib, cynical song stylist; his performance, while certainly agile, is depressingly insincere.

—Louis Kesten



Joe Jackson: Big World

VIDEO QUICK TAKES

SUMO WRESTLING

1986. 63m. \$39.95. U.S.A. Image: good.

The venerable Japanese sport of sumo wrestling is digested and demystified in this record of 1985's historic Madison Square Garden tournament. Highlights of the match are punctuated by silly photo opportunities of the bulbous wrestlers sightseeing New York. Several moments of amazing physical strength and dexterity may be appreciated, however, particularly when 490-pound, 23-year-old Hawaiian wrestler Konishiki is in the ring. (He wasn't nicknamed "Meat Bomb" for nothing.) But while some 60 accepted techniques for ejecting an opponent from the ring or bringing him to the ground are recognized, only a half-dozen or so will be observed in this ultimately disappointing documentary. —Richard Gehr



Sumo Wrestling

CARL PERKINS:

BLUE SUEDE SHOES

1986. Carl Perkins, George Harrison, Eric Clapton; dir. Tom Gutteridge. 60m. Hi St. \$29.95. MCA. Image: good.

At last, an event devoted to the nicest cat to ever echo out of Sun Studios. The last person to say anything nasty about Carl Perkins was Attila the Hun, and he was obviously talking about a different Carl Perkins. This is the man who put the "billy" in rockabilly and penned classics like "Blue Suede Shoes," "Honey Don't," and "Matchbox," a fellow so humble that the likes of George Harrison, Ringo Starr, and Eric Clapton all but vanish in the vacuum left by Perkins' non-ego. Herded together for a tributary rave-up, this trio of old Perkins pals join Dave Edmunds' band, Rosanne Cash, and neo-traditionalists Phantom, Rocker and Slick to back Carl in a living musical monument. Perkins even cries during the credits, bless his heart. When you pack your matchbox, be sure to put this cassette in it. —John Walker

PINSTRIPE POWER

1986. Color/B&W. Pr. Joe Lavine/Sean Mooney; wr. Steve Stern; nar. E. G. Marshall. 49m. V only. \$19.95. Scotch. Image: good.

In 1961, the year I turned 7, the Yankees were about the biggest thing in my life. The Bombers had talent and strength beyond belief: Roger Maris socked 61 homers (Mantle, sidelined by a late-season injury, only got 54); Elston Howard hit. 348; Whitey Ford went 25 and 4. A quarter-century is a long time to

recall anything vividly, even such a wonderfully innocent time; this loving look at that mythic team and their awesome season offers a perfect refresher. New interviews with Ford, Houk, Kubek, Richardson, Skowron, and other legendary figures illuminate the black & white newsreel footage, while month-by-month narration moves the pennant and home run races along. —Ira Robbins

THAT'S SINGING

1982. Ethel Merman, Tom Bosley, Glynis Johns, Barry Bostwick, Chita Rivera, Nell Carter, Robert Morse, Alexis Smith, Anthony Perkins, Ray Walston, Debbie Reynolds, Diahann Carroll; dir. Rob Iscove. 111m. \$19.95. Karl. Image: good

It seemed a neat idea—getting the original actors from Broadway shows to reprise their hits in California in a big stage extravaganza—until they actually did it. Broadway isn't (or wasn't) Las Vegas, and actors used to actually act there, even in musicals. This glitzy showcase is notable mainly for how much the "Hollywood" Broadway stars have forgotten what to do on stage, for the level to which standards of choreographic execution have sunk, and for how a real song, sung by an actor who knows his or her craft, can work better than anything else. Kudos to Len Cariou, Glynis Johns, Anthony Perkins, Chita Rivera, and Jerry Orbach for showing the rest of them how it's still done and to the original writers, composers, and choreographers, who might need a bit of cheering up after seeing some of this tape.

—M. George Stevenson

FILM HOUSE FEVER

1986 comp. Color/B&W. wr./pr./dir. Domonic Paris. 58m. \$59.95. Vestron. Image: poor.

It looks like a Rhino, it sounds like a Rhino, but this B-movie cut-and-paste job doesn't come close to Rhino Video's lunatic homages to the best of cinema's worst. Nor is it a substitute for SF Rush Video's fabulous trailer compilations. Newly-shot continuity footage featuring two buffoonish slob misses the point that most junk junkies fall into the preconscious-intellectual category: they like feeling superior to the material. Most of the clips themselves come from bleached film stock and damaged videotape, both virtually unwatchable.

—Mark Fleischmann

TAKE CHARGE!

1986. Dr. Harold H. Bloomfield, Sirah Vettese, Ph.D.; dir. Marc Ray. 60m. \$24.95. McGraw-Hill. Image: good.

This program mixes self-help philosophy with "take charge!" cheerleading under the subtitle "How to Become Your Own Best Therapist." Our engaging and knowledgeable host and hostess deliver a torrent of good advice and occasionally pull volunteers from the studio audience for a demonstration—whether they're ready for it or not. The relaxation episodes recall various anti-stress tapes but are too hasty to achieve the same effect. The acting-out of tense situations is brisk but well-done, sometimes evoking MCA's *You Can Win*. Good of this kind. But beware of an underlying fallacy: most card-carrying neurotics are their own worst therapists. —Mark Fleischmann

BIG CITY COMEDY

1986. John Candy, Billy Crystal, Martin Mull. 56m. \$59.95. Vestron. Image: good.

Big comic names cavort tenaciously in this hastily cranked-out vehicle for Canadian TV. Martin Mull dignifies so-so material with his customary drollery and Billy Crystal is maniacally charming throughout. But most of the writing and performances are all too perfunctory. Even the best bit—Mikhail Fishnikov, the dancing detective—is symptomatic, offered so indifferently that a potential belly-laugh shrinks to a minor giggle. Adding this to the current gush of comedy tapes is of questionable service, except for the most easily amused.

—Mark Fleischmann

Directory

NEW RELEASES ON TAPE AND DISC

Action

The Abduction of St. Anne. 1975. Robert Wagner, E.G. Marshall, Kathleen Quinlan, Lloyd Nolan. Mobster's daughter reputed to have miraculous powers. 78m. \$49.95. Worldvision.

Angel and the Badman. 1947; colorized 1986. John Wayne, Gail Russell, Harry Carey, Irene Rich. Quaker girl reforms gunman. 100m. \$29.95. Roach.

The Assassination Run. 1984. Malcolm Stoddard, Mary Tamm. German terrorists kidnap wife of retired British spy. 111m. Hi \$59.98. Playhouse.

Bad Company 1972. Jeff Bridges, Barry Brown, Jim Davis, David Huddleston, John Sav-

age; dir. Robert Benton. Thieving buddies in frontier West. 94m. (PG) \$24.95. Paramount.

Bad Guys. 1986. Mike Jolly, Adam Baldwin, Ruth Buzzi, Sgt. Slaughter. Woman reporter convinces cops to moonlight as pro wrestlers. 87m. \$79.95. U.S.A.

Badge 373. 1973. Robert Duvall, Verna Bloom. New York cop pursues men who killed his partner. 116m. (R) \$24.95. Paramount.

Black Moon Rising. 1986. Tommy Lee Jones, Linda Hamilton. Government agent with high-tech roadster. 100m. (R) LV \$34.95. Image.

Brannigan. 1975. John Wayne, Richard Attenborough, Judy Geeson. Chicago cop pursues gangster to England. 111m. Hi \$59.98. Playhouse.

The City. 1977. Don Johnson, Ward Costello, Jimmy Dean, Mark Hamill. Policemen protect

country singer from psychotic killer. 78m. \$49.95. Worldvision.

Cobra. 1971. Sterling Hayden, Senta Berger. Man kills those responsible for wife's death, and others. 93m. \$59.95. Unicorn.

The Conqueror and the Empress. 1964. Guy Madison, Ray Danton, Mario Petri, Albert Farnes. Island prince deposed by British invaders. 89m. \$69.95. Force.

Dance of Death. 1984. Mao Ying, Shih Tien. Martial arts: beggar girl takes up kung-fu. 81m. \$39.95. Unicorn.

Day of the Assassin. 1981. Chuck Connors, Glenn Ford, Richard Roundtree. Eastern ruler's yacht sinks; scramble for sunken treasure. 94m. \$79.95. Prism.

The Delta Force. 1985. Chuck Norris, Lee Marvin, Shelley Winters, Martin Balsam. Anti-terrorist commandos. 125m. (R) LV \$39.98. Image.

The Dirt Bike Kid. 1985. Peter Billingsley, Stuart Pankin, Anne Bloom. Champion rider. 91m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.95. LV \$34.95. Charter.

The Don Is Dead. 1973. Anthony Quinn, Frederic Forrest, Robert Forster. Mafia gang war. 96m. (R) Hi \$59.95. MCA.

Dragon Rider. 1985. Wong Sun. Martial arts: underworld drug bosses live to regret assassination attempt. 87m. \$59.95. World.

Drums. 1938. Roger Livesey, Sabu, Raymond Massey; dir. Zoltan Korda. British officer in colonial India. 96m. Hi \$39.95. Embassy.

East of Borneo. 1931. B&W. Charles Bickford, Rose Hobart. Doctor flees to Malaya to forget divorced wife. 77m. \$24.95. Cable.

8 Million Ways to Die. 1986. Jeff Bridges, Rosanna Arquette, Alexandra Paul, Andy Garcia; dir. Hal Ashby. Alcoholic detective on trail of prostitute's killers. 115m. (R) Hi St cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

The Evil That Men Do. 1984. Charles Bronson, Theresa Saldana. Professional killer comes out of retirement to combat Central American torture group. 90m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Fists of Bruce Lee. 1982. Bruce Li. Martial arts: undercover agent puts crimp in drug ring's operations. 90m. \$59.95. Gems.

The Four Feathers. 1939. Ralph Richardson, John Clements, C. Aubrey Smith, June Duprez; dir. Zoltan Korda. British Army officer declines war post for fiancée. 115m. Hi \$39.95. Embassy.

The Furious Avenger. 1976. Hsiung Fei, Fan Ling. Martial arts: hostilities in Japanese-occu-

PROGRAMMING LEGEND

DATE

Varies according to type of program as follows: **Films:** original theatrical release. **Made-for-broadcast:** first telecast. **Made-for-video:** first release in any format. **Compilations:** production of collected work.

FORMAT

All programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted. All programs on videodisc are also available on videocassette unless noted. The following abbreviations apply:

B: Beta videocassette
V: VHS videocassette
8: 8mm videocassette
LV: LaserVision videodisc
CED: CED videodisc

AUDIO FEATURES

All available audio information is provided. The following abbreviations apply:

St: stereo
Hi: Hi-Fi
D: Dolby noise reduction
ss: surround sound
cc: closed-captioned for the hearing impaired
CX: CX encoded

IMAGE QUALITY

For theatrical releases, this rating refers to the transfer quality and overall visual appearance. For non-theatrical productions, it refers to overall visual quality.

excel.: exceptionally attractive and/or faithful to the original

good: adequate but unremarkable

poor: seriously flawed

ETCETERA

Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R) are provided when available. All programs are in color unless noted. Prices are not generally given for CED discs.

anim.: animated
B&W: black & white
cas.: videocassette
comp.: compilation
dir.: directed by
m.: minutes
nar.: narrated by
pr.: produced by
RE: reissue
sub.: subtitled
wr.: written by

Editors' choices in the "Directory" are highlighted with red titles.

ped China. 84m. \$39.95. Unicorn.

F/X. 1986. Bryan Brown. Justice Department hires Hollywood special effects expert to stage fake assassination. 108m. (R) Hi St \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.

Jason and the Argonauts. 1963. Todd Armstrong, Gary Raymond, Nancy Kovack. Search for the Golden Fleece. Effects by Ray Harryhausen; score by Bernard Herrmann. 104m. 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Kim. 1950. Errol Flynn, Dean Stockwell, Paul Lukas. Adaptation of Kipling story: English boy orphaned in 19th century India. 113m. (G) Hi \$24.95. MGM/UA.

Law of the Land. 1976. Don Johnson, Jim Davis, Barbara Parkins. TV movie: Bordello patron witnesses murder. 100m. \$49.95. Worldvision.

Long John Silver. 1953. Robert Newton, Connie Gilchrist, Rod Taylor. Adaptation of Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. 106m. \$24.95. Cable.

Manhunter. 1974. Ken Howard, Gary Lockwood, Tim O'Connor, Stefanie Powers. Pilot film for TV series: ex-WWI marine pursues bankrobbing team during depression. 98m. \$49.95. Worldvision.

The Marauder. 1965. Gordon Scott, Maria Canale. Venetian prince organizes armada to defend city. 90m. \$69.95. Force.

Mastermind—Target London. 1981. Sam Waterston, George Innes, Julian Glover. Episode of British TV series about brilliant sleuth-inventor. 48m. Hi St cc \$39.98. Playhouse.

Miami Vice II—The Prodigal Son. 1985. Don Johnson, Philip Michael Thomas. Extended episode

from TV series. 99m. LV St CX \$29.98. MCA.

Most Wanted. 1976. Robert Stack, Shelly Novack, Tom Selleck. Pilot film for TV series: special police unit. 78m. \$49.95. Worldvision.

Murphy's War. 1971. Peter O'Toole, Sian Phillips, Phillippe Noiret. Survivor of Nazi massacre takes on German navy in dilapidated seaplane. 106m. \$24.95. Paramount.

Mysterious Mr. Wong. 1935. B&W. Bela Lugosi, Wallace Ford. Search for coins that make possessor all-powerful. 60m. \$24.95. Cable.

The Naked Cage. 1986. Angel Tompkins, Shari Shattack. New arrival at women's penitentiary. 97m. (R) \$79.95. Media.

Nevada Smith. 1966. Steve McQueen, Karl Malden, Brian Keith, Arthur Kennedy, Suzanne Pleshette. Half-breed gunslinger in search of his parents' killers. 135m. \$24.95. Paramount.

Newman's Law. 1974. George Peppard, Roger Robinson, Eugene Roche. Detective tailing dope pusher stumbles on bigger game. 98m. (PG) Hi \$59.95. MCA.

Ninja Massacre. 1982. Lo Lieh, Pai Ying, Lung Jun Ehr. Martial arts: search for coveted self-defense manual. 87m. \$59.95. Gems.

Ninja Turf. 1986. Jun Chong, Bill Wallace, Rosanna King. Martial arts: drug dealer pursues teenage gang who stole suitcase full of cash. 83m. (R) Hi \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Only Way Home. 1975. Bo Hopkins. Two Oklahoma drifters kidnap woman. 85m. (PG) \$39.95. World.

CASH REGISTER

Special promotions and other pricing news

Determined to land a tape or two under every Christmas tree, distributors are reintroducing high quality titles at bargain prices.

MCA has announced a four-month Hitchcock extravaganza that includes 13 of his classics: *The Birds*, *Frenzy*, *Vertigo*, *Psycho*, *Rope*, *Family Plot*, *The Trouble with Harry*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956 version), *Saboteur*, *Torn Curtain*, *Topaz*, and *Rear Window*, each priced at \$24.95 through February. One brand new title, *Marnie* (see Directory) is also available at sale price.

A dozen "Movies Great Movies" are on sale from MGM/UA for \$19.95 apiece. The roster includes grade-A features like *Midnight Cowboy* (R-rated version), *Network*, *North by Northwest*, *Forbidden Planet*, *Jailhouse Rock*, and the Marx Brothers' *At the Circus*. The catch? It only lasts through the end of January.

Warner offers a permanent \$24.95 list price on 21 theatrical features, all previously released except *The Music Man* (see Directory). Some real finds here include *Bonnie and Clyde*, *All the President's Men*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, and *The Road Warrior*.

Known mainly as a distributor of public-domain and budget programming, Congress Video has signed a distribution deal with Embassy to mass-market a cross section of Embassy titles that bowed at \$24.95 to \$34.95. *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and *The Littlest Angel* will go for \$14.95. For \$9.95 Congress offers *Here Comes the Grump*, *Christmas Raccoons*, *Tukiki and His Search for a Merry Christmas*, an episode of *The New Three Stooges*, the aerobics program *Pump It*, and *Texercise*.

Lots of stockings may soon be stuffed with two-tape packages from Family Home Entertainment. They've coupled 14 of their best-selling programs, each pair now going for \$19.95. Titles include *Care Bears Battle the Freeze Machine/Care Bears in the Land Without Feeling*, *Transformers: Divide and Conquer/Fire on the Mountain*, and *Thundercats: Pumm Ra/Spitting Image*. Those who've been extra-good may merit one of two \$24.95 twin packs, *The Velveteen Rabbit/Rumplestiltskin* or *Pound Puppies/Star Fairies*.

VidAmerica has cut 88 catalogue titles permanently to \$29.95 and \$19.95. The higher price applies to such J. Arthur Rank productions as *Seance on a Wet Afternoon* and *Black Narcissus*, plus music titles *Neil Young in Berlin* and *Yessongs*. The \$19.95 contingent includes classics *Gunga Din*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Suspicion*, *Kitty Foyle*, *King Kong*, *Citizen Kane*, *Fort Apache*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, and *Top Hat*.

Here's one final addition to the deluge now flooding your local video stores: 18 titles from the MusicVision catalogue repriced at \$19.95 through December 31. Titles include *Diana Ross in Concert*, *U2—The Unforgettable Fire Collection*, *Pavarotti in London*, and *John Cougar Mellencamp—Ain't That America*. —Steve Daly

Pirate Warrior. 1964. Ricardo Montalban, Vincent Price, Liana Orfei. Pirate vows end to evil rival's white slavery operation. 86m. \$69.95. Force.

Quicksilver. 1986. Kevin Bacon, Jami Gertz. Bike messenger's girlfriend mixed up with drug traffickers. 106m. (PG) Hi St D \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

P.O.W.—The Escape. 1986. David Carradine. Rescue of American soldiers held in Vietnam. 90m. (R) Hi \$79.95. Media.

Rad. 1986. Bill Allen, Lori Loughlin, Talia Shire, Jack Westton. Bicycle daredevil determined to qualify for championship

Rad



race. 94m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.95. Embassy.

Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe, Private Eye: Smart-Aleck Kill. 1983. Powers Boothe, Michael J. Shannon, Liza Ross. Producer tries to keep actor's death a secret until film premiere. 53m. Hi cc \$39.98. Playhouse.

Robbery. 1985. John Sheerin, Tony Rickards. Army buddies reunite to fleece bookie operation. 91m. \$69.95. Lightning.

Runaway Train. 1985. Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, Rebecca DeMornay. Pair of prisoners escape with cruel warden in pursuit. 112m. (R) Hi St D ss cc \$79.95. MGM/UA.

Russian Roulette. 1975. George Segal, Christina Raines, Denholm Elliott. Canadian detective uncovers plot to assassinate visiting Russian premier. 100m. Hi \$59.98. Key.

Shaker Run. 1985. Cliff Robertson, Leif Garrett, Lisa Harrow. Stunt car driver agrees to transport deadly virus. 91m. LV \$34.95. Embassy.

Silent Rage. 1982. Chuck Norris. Texas sheriff vs. genetically engineered killer. 105m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Sinbad the Sailor. 1947. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Maureen O'Hara, Anthony Quinn. Voyage to island where Alexander the Great deposited treasure. 117m. \$29.95. RKO.

The Spoilers. 1942. B&W. John Wayne, Marlene Dietrich, Randolph Scott. Yukon adventurers. 84m. LV (side 2 CAV) CX \$29.98. MCA.

The Steel Claw. 1961. George Montgomery, Charito Luna, Mario Barri. Marine who lost a hand organizes resistance to Japanese invasion of Philippines. 95m. \$59.95. Monterey.

A Stranger in Paso Bravo. 1973. Antony Steffen, Giulia Rubini. Spaghetti western: gunslinger out to avenge death of wife and daughter. Dubbed. 92m. \$49.95. Unicorn.

Street Hawk. 1984. Rex Smith, Jayne Modean, Christopher Lloyd. Pilot of TV series: motorcycle police officer. 60m. Hi \$39.95. MCA.

The Tattoo Connection. 1978. Jim Kelly, Chen Sing. Martial arts:

investigator faces mastermind of diamond heist. 95m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Embassy.

Texas. 1941. B&W. William Holden, Glenn Ford, Claire Trevor. Cowboys compete for ranch owner's affections. 94m. Hi \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Wind and the Lion. 1975. Sean Connery, Candice Bergen, Brian Keith, John Huston, Geoffrey Lewis; wr/dir. John Milius. Moroccan desert sheik kidnaps American woman and her son, ca. 1900. 120m. (PG) Hi St D \$59.95. MGM/UA.

Young Sherlock Holmes. 1985. Nicholas Rowe, Alan Cox, Sophie Ward. Holmes and Watson meet as schoolboys. 109m. (PG-13) Hi St cc \$79.95. LV St \$29.95. Paramount.



Animal Stories. 1986 comp. anim. Adaptations of acclaimed storybooks *Andy and the Lion*, *Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears*, *Petunia*. 30m. \$29.95. CC.

Beany & Cecil Vol. 1. 1984. anim. Dir. Bob Clampett. 45m. 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Beniker Gang. 1984. Andrew McCarthy, Jennie Dundas, Danny Pintauro. Eldest of five runaway orphans supports brood by writing newspaper advice column. 87m. (G) \$59.95. Scholastic.

Billy Possum. 1979. anim. Three episodes from *Fables of the Green Forest*: *Uncle Billy Regrets*, *Whose Footprint Is That?*, *Lost in the Green Forest*. 60m. \$29.95. Family.

Care Bears Movie II: A New Generation. 1986. anim. Origin of the Care Bear family. 77m. (G) Hi cc \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Care Bears Storybook. 1986. anim. Care Bears vanquish Professor Coldheart, Auntie Freeze. 100m. \$69.95. Karl.

Colorforms Learn 'n' Play Vols. 1, 2. 1986. Viewers use Colorforms stick-ons to help characters through adventures: includes playboard, 40 plastic play pieces, reading tip sheet for parents. 30m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Scholastic.

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. 1970. anim. 19th-century engineer transported back to year 528. 74m. Hi \$19.95. MGM/UA.

Dogtanian and the Three Musketeers—Dogtanian Meets the Black Moustache. 1986. anim. Canine retread of Dumas classic. 30m. Hi \$9.95. Sony.

The Edison Twins Vol. 3. 1986. Andres Sabiston, Marnie McPhail. *Snakes and Ladders*: search for missing baby boa. *Monkey in the Middle*: how species communicate. 45m. \$19.95. Magic.

Fantasy Theater. 1986. Bill Jones, Mizzy Franny. Fairy tales and fables as told by Heather the Harp, Willie the Leprechaun. Series of 39 cas., including *The Widow's Lazy Daughter*, *The Well at the World's End*, *Thumbelina*, *Little One Inch*. 30m. ea. \$9.95 ea. Recess.

The Flintstones Little Big League. 1986. anim. Feature-length outing with Fred, Wilma and crew. 65m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

He-Man and the Masters of the Universe Vols. 1, 2. 1983. anim. 45m. ea. 8 \$29.95 ea. RCA/Columbia.

Huckleberry Hound. 1986. comp. anim. 60m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

Karate for Your Child. 1986. Ed Parker, Larry Tatum demonstrate self-defense techniques, ways to improve mental discipline. 30m. \$19.95. Master.

The Legend of Robin Hood. 1970. anim. Denizens of Sherwood Forest. 47m. \$19.95. MGM/UA.

Little Kids Dynamite All Star Band. 1986. Betty Nelson, Charles J. Dunn, Rodney Perkins. Moppet musicians perform before enchanted mirror. Two episodes available. 30m. ea. \$9.95 ea. Recess.

Little Women—Angels in Boots. 1986. anim. Intrigues of four sisters. 30m. Hi \$9.95. Sony.

The Magic Christmas Tree. 1972. Chris Kroesen, Charles Nix. Young boy rescues Santa Claus from kidnappers. 70m. \$49.95. United.

MASK: The Ultimate Solution. 1986. anim. 100m. \$69.95. Karl.

A Mirthworm Masquerade. 1986. anim. Fable of costume ball competition. 30m. \$14.95. Family.

The New Three Stooges Film Festival. 1965. Live action/anim. Four cas., 2 episodes ea.: *Up, Up and Away*, *Cohorts in Sports*, *Bear Necessities*, *Once Upon a Time*. 60m. ea. Hi \$14.95 ea. Embassy.

One Minute Bible Stories. 1986. Shari Lewis. Two cas.: *Old Testament*, nar. Lewis and Lamb Chop; *New Testament*, with Florence Henderson. 26 stories per cas. 30m. ea. \$19.95 ea. Magic.

Popples. 1986. anim. Gregarious little furry creatures. Three cas., 2 stories ea.: *Treasure of Popple Beach*, *Springtime's a-Poppin'*, *A Clean Sweep of Things*. 25m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Magic.

The Prince and the Pauper. 1970. anim. Lookalike boys change places. 47m. \$19.95. MGM/UA.

One-Minute Bible Stories





American Tickler

Quick-Draw McGraw. 1986 comp. anim. 60m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

Santa Claus—The Movie. 1985. Dudley Moore, John Lithgow, David Huddleston, Burgess Meredith. Evil toy manufacturer hires one of Santa's elves in effort to put St. Nick out of business. 104m. (PG) Hi St cc \$79.95. Media.

She-Ra, Princess of Power Vol. 1. 1985. anim. *The Missing Axe, The Crystal Cave.* 45m. 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Sleeping Beauty. 1959. anim. Feature adaptation of the fairy tale. 75m. Hi St \$29.95. Disney.

Top Cat's Loves and Fortunes. 1986 comp. anim. 60m. \$19.95. Worldvision.

Wi'l Cwac Cwac Vol. 1. 1983. anim. Inquisitive young duck. 50m. \$14.95. Family.



Africa Screams. 1949. B&W. Bud Abbott, Lou Costello, Hilary Brooke, Clyde Beatty. Secret map triggers inept safari. 80m. \$24.95. Cable.

American Tickler. Joe Piscopo, W.P. Dremak, Joan Sumner. Series of skits, parodies. 77m. \$59.95. Gems.

...And Justice for All. 1979. Al Pacino, Jack Warden, John Forsythe, Lee Strasberg; dir. Norman Jewison. Idealistic young lawyer. 118m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Bird of Paradise. 1932. B&W. Dolores del Rio, Joel McCrea; dir. King Vidor. Sailor playboy rescues native girl from sacrifice. 80m. \$24.95. Cable.

Casino Royale. 1967. David Niven, Orson Welles, Ursula Andress, Peter Sellers, many others. James Bond farce. 130m. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia.

Educating Rita. 1983. Michael Caine, Julie Walters. Working-class English woman tutored by alcoholic professor. 110m. (PG) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Gumshoe. 1972. Albert Finney, Billie Whitelaw, Frank Finlay. Music hall comedian becomes detective. 85m. (G) Hi \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Gung Ho. 1986. Michael Keaton, Gedde Watanabe, George Wendt; dir. Ron Howard. Small-town auto worker persuades Japanese company to take over defunct plant. 111m. (PG-13) Hi St D cc \$79.95. LV St \$29.95. Paramount.

Man of Destiny. 1973. Stacy Keach, Samantha Eggart, William Bassett, Gino Conforti. George Bernard Shaw's battle of the sexes: public TV production. 60m. \$29.95. U.S.A.

Meatballs Part II. 1984. Richard Mulligan, John Mengatti. Rival

summer camps. 87m. (PG) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Monty Python and the Holy Grail. 1974. Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Jones, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Michael Palin. Satirical crusade epic. 89m. (PG) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Moscow on the Hudson. 1984. Robin Williams, Maria Conchita Alonso; dir. Paul Mazursky. Russian defects while shopping in Bloomingdale's. 115m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Music Box/Helpmates. 1932. colorized 1986. Pair of vintage Laurel and Hardy shorts. 50m. \$19.95. Roach.

Revenge of the Cheerleaders. 1976. David Hasselhoff, Eddra Gale, Rainbeaux Smith. Pom-pom girls get even with high school basketball team. 86m. (R) \$69.95. Lightning.

Room Service. 1938. B&W. Groucho, Chico and Harpo Marx, Lucille Ball. Wisecracking producer out to finance play. 78m. \$29.95. RKO.

Sotto...Sotto. 1985. Enrico Montesano, Veronica Lario; dir. Lina Wertmüller. Wife's affair drives husband to drink. 104m. (R) Hi sub. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Steve Martin Live! 1986. Martin, David Letterman, Henny Youngman, Paul Simon, Alan King, Henry Winkler. Clips from concert performances plus 1977 short with Teri Garr, Buck Henry. 60m. LV \$29.95. Vestron.

The Toy. 1982. Richard Pryor, Jackie Gleason, Scott Schwartz, Ned Beatty. Rich boy browsing in toy store chooses to bring home sales clerk. 99m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Used Cars. 1980. Kurt Russell, Jack Warden; dir. Robert Zemeckis. Rival dealers will stop at nothing to win customers. 113m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Vampire Happening. Horror spoof. 90m. (R) \$59.95. United.

Wildcats. 1986. Goldie Hawn, James Keach, Swoosie Kurtz, Nipsey Russell; dir. Michael Ritchie. Hawn as coach of fourth-rate high school football team. 106m. (R) Hi St cc \$79.95. Spanish-sub. version (*Echame La Pelota, Chica V* only.) LV St CX cc \$34.98. Warner.



The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. 1939. B&W. Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Ida Lupino, George Zucco. Holmes tangles with Professor Moriarty. 86m. Hi \$29.98. Playhouse.

Against All Odds. 1984. Rachel Ward, Jeff Bridges. Ex-football player hired to track down runaway mistress. 122m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Almos' a Man. 1977. LeVar Burton, Madge Sinclair, Robert Doherty. Installment of Public TV's *American Short Story* series based on Richard Wright tale: southern black teenager, ca. 1930. 51m. \$24.95. Monterey.

Animal Farm. 1955. anim. Adaptation of George Orwell's political allegory. 72m. LV \$34.95. Vestron.

Annie Oakley. 1935. B&W. Barbara Stanwyck, Preston Foster, Melvyn Douglas; dir. George Stevens. Stormy romance of rival sharpshooters. 91m. \$29.95. RKO.

Beachcomber (former title *Vessel of Wrath*). 1983. B&W. Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, Robert Newton, Tyrone Guthrie. From Somerset Maugham story: drifter in love with missionary's prim sister. 88m. \$24.95. Cable.

The Big Chill. 1983. Tom Berenger, Glenn Close, Jeff Goldblum, William Hurt, Kevin Kline, Mary Kay Place, Meg Tilly, JoBeth Williams; wr/dir. Lawrence Kasdan. '60s college friends reunited by funeral. 103m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Breaker Morant. 1979. Edward Woodward, Jack Thompson. Courtmartial trial, ca. Boer War. 107m. (PG) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Brothers Karamazov. 1957. Yul Brynner, Claire Bloom, Lee J. Cobb, William Shatner; wr/dir. Richard Brooks. Siblings in 19th-century Russia plot to gain lion's share of dying father's inheritance. 147m. Hi \$24.95. MGM/UA.

Come and Get It. 1936. B&W. Edward Arnold, Joel McCrea,

Frances Farmer. Father and son lumberjacks in love with same woman. 99m. Hi \$39.95. Embassy.

Day of Wrath. 1946. B&W. Thor-kild Rose, Lisbeth Moven; dir. Carl Dreyer. Elderly pastor's wife accused of witchcraft. 110m. sub. \$24.95. Cable.

Empty Beach. 1985. Bryan Brown, Anna Maria Monticelli. Detective investigates tycoon's disappearance. 87m. \$69.95. Lightning.

Fever Pitch. 1985. Ryan O'Neal, Catherine Hicks, Giancarlo Gianini. Journalist researching series on casinos finds he can't stop gambling. 95m. (R) Hi cc \$79.98. Key.

First Fruits. 1983. Story of 18th-century Christian missionaries in West Indies. 79m. \$59.95. Vanguard.

Formula for a Murder. 1985. Christina Nagy, David Warbeck, Rossano Brazzi. Wealthy paralyzed woman marries her therapist, who plans to kill her. 89m. \$69.95. Lightning.

Framed. 1975. Joe Don Baker, Conny Van Dyke. Man wrongly imprisoned for murder of sheriff evens the score after making parole. 106m. (R) \$24.95. Paramount.

Funeral in Berlin. 1966. Michael Caine, Eva Renzi, Oscar Homolka. British spy sent to Berlin to aid Russian defector. 102m. \$24.95. Paramount.

The Green Horizon. 1983. James Stewart, Philip Sayer, Elenora Vallone. Made-for-cable feature about dedicated conservationist. 80m. \$29.95. Family.

Guest in the House. 1944. B&W. Anne Baxter, Ralph Bellamy. Disturbed girl causes trouble between doctor and wife. 101m. \$24.95. Cable.

Half Slave, Half Free. Mason Adams, Avery Brooks. Northern black man kidnapped and sold into slavery in Louisiana. 113m. Hi \$59.95. Sony.

Hard Choices. 1986. Gary McCleery, Margaret Klenck, John Sayles. Woman social worker helps teenage boy escape prison. 90m. \$79.95. Karl.

Home to Stay. 1978. Henry Fonda, Dristen Vigard. Girl determined to keep grandfather out of

nursing home. 74m. \$59.95. Lightning.

The Hurried Man. 1977. Alain Delon, Christian Barbier. International art smuggler. Dubbed. 91m. \$59.95. Unicorn.

The Hustler. 1961. B&W. Paul Newman, Jackie Gleason, George C. Scott, Piper Laurie; pr/dir. Robert Rossen. Arrogant pool shark meets his match. 134m. Hi cc \$59.98. Key.

Intermezzo. 1939. B&W. Leslie Howard, Ingrid Bergman, Edna Best. Violinist drawn to pianist tutoring his daughter. 70m. LV \$34.98. CBS/Fox.

The Jolson Story. 1946. Larry Parks, Evelyn Keyes, William Demarest. Hollywood bio of vaudeville performer. 128m. \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Killjoy. 1981. Robert Culp, Nancy Marchand, John Rubinstein, Kim Basinger. Cop tracks down four suspects in murder of young woman. 96m. \$49.95. U.S.A.

Kojak: The Belarus File. 1985. Telly Savalas, Suzanne Pleshette, Max Von Sydow. Death camp survivors targeted by killer. 95m. Hi \$39.95. MCA.

Lady Jane. 1985. Helena Bonham Carter, Cary Elwes; dir. Trevor Nunn. Romance based on story of 16th century girl who briefly became Queen of England at age 16. 140m. Hi St D cc \$79.95. LV St \$29.95. Paramount.

Living Free. 1972. Susan Hampshire, Nigel Davenport. Sequel to *Born Free*: should dying lioness' cubs be protected from predators or fend for themselves? 91m. (G) Hi \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Madigan. 1968. Richard Widmark, Henry Fonda, Inger Stevens, Harry Guardino; dir. Don Siegel. New York cop has three days to find killer. 101m. Hi \$59.95. MCA.

Marnie. 1964. Tippi Hedren, Sean Connery, Diane Baker; dir. Alfred Hitchcock; score by Bernard Herrmann. Woman compelled to steal money from men. 129m. \$24.95. MCA.

Midnight Express. 1978. Brad Davis, Randy Quaid, John Hurt; dir. Alan Parker. True story of American's harrowing term in Turkish prison for minor drug offense. 120m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Molly Maguires. 1970. Sean Connery, Richard Harris, Samantha Eggar. Group of Irish coal miners infiltrated by informant. 123m. (PG) \$24.95. Paramount.

The Mystery of Alexina. 1986. Dir. Rene Feret. Love story based on memoirs of 19th century hermaphrodite. 84m. Hi sub. \$59.95. Embassy.

Napoleon. 1927, tinted 1981. Albert Dieudonne, Gina Manes; wr/dir. Abel Gance. Restored version of silent epic; music by Carmine Coppola. 235m. (2 cas.) (G) Hi St D ss \$79.95. MCA.

Not My Kid. 1985. George Segal, Stockard Channing, Viveka Davis. Parents discover their teenage daughter has serious drug problem. 120m. \$79.95. Sony.

Out of Africa. 1985. Meryl Streep, Robert Redford, Klaus Maria Brandauer; dir. Sydney Pollack. Romance between strong-willed proprietress of Kenya plantation, independent hunter. 161m. (PG) Hi St D ss cc \$79.95. MCA.

Power. 1985. Richard Gere, Julie Christie, Gene Hackman; dir. Sidney Lumet. Ruthless media consultant's gallery of political candidates. 111m. (R) LV \$29.95. Karl.

The Private Life of Henry VIII. 1933. B&W. Charles Laughton, Binnie Barnes, Robert Donat, Elsa Lanchester, Merle Oberon; dir. Alexander Korda. Portrait of 16th century king. 97m. LV \$34.95. Embassy.

Rachel's Man. 1975. Mickey Rooney, Leonard Whiting, Rita Tushingham. Adaptation of Biblical story: fate keeps couple apart. 115m. \$59.95. Lightning.

Rain. 1932. B&W. Joan Crawford, Walter Huston, Guy Kibbee, William Gargan. From Somerset Maugham story: minister on tropical isle in love with prostitute. 93m. \$24.95. Cable.

The Red House. 1947. B&W. Edward G. Robinson, Rory Calhoun, Judith Anderson. Farmer warns of house's terrible secret. 100m. \$24.95. Cable.

Revenge. 1986. Patrick Wayne, John Carradine. Made-for-video thriller. 100m. Hi \$69.95. United.

Smooth Talk. 1986. Treat Williams, Laura Dern, Mary Kay Place. Teenage girl's sexual awakening. 91m. (PG-13) LV \$34.95. Vestron.

A Song to Remember. 1945. Cornel Wilde, Paul Muni, Merle Oberon. Hollywood bio of Chopin, with Oberon as George Sand. 112m. LV \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Spring Symphony. 1986. Nastassja Kinski, Herbert Grönemeyer. Romance of concert pianist and composer Schumann. 102m. (PG-13) \$79.95. Lightning.

A Star Is Born. 1937. Janet Gaynor, Fredric March. Young actress on the way up marries failing, alcoholic star. 111m. LV CX \$29.95. Image.

The Stripper. 1963. B&W. Joanne Woodward, Richard Beymer, Claire Trevor, Carol Lynley, Gypsy Rose Lee. Aging dancer in second-rate strip act falls in love with sheltered young man. 95m. Hi \$59.98. Key.

Svengali. 1983. Peter O'Toole, Jodie Foster, Elizabeth Ashley. Has-been performer obsessed with managing personal and professional life of rock singer. 96m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

The Mystery of Alexina



The Sword and the Cross. 1958. Yvonne De Carlo, George Michael. Brother of Mary Magdalene demands she abandon life as harlot in Roman court. 93m. \$69.95. Force.

Taxi Driver. 1977. Robert De Niro, Cybill Shepherd, Jodie Foster; dir. Martin Scorsese. Disturbed ex-marine prepares to assassinate politician. 112m. (R) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Tell Me a Riddle. 1980. Melvyn Douglas, Lila Kedrova, Brooke Adams; dir. Lee Grant. Based on Tillie Olsen's novella of a 40 year marriage. 94m. (PG) \$69.95. Cinematheque.

Threads. 1985. Karen Meagher, Rita May, David Brierly. Graphic depiction of global nuclear war and aftermath. 110m. \$64.95. Spanish version (dubbed) \$44.95. World.

Time for Revenge. 1983. Federico Luppi, Haydee Padilla. Demolition worker plots to expose corrupt management. 112m. sub. \$59.95. Cinematheque.

Time Lock. 1957. B&W. Sean Connery, Robert Beatty, Lee Patterson; wr. Arthur Hailey. Boy trapped in bank vault that won't reopen for three days. 73m. \$39.95. Monterey.

Vengeance Is Mine. 1980. Ernest Borgnine, Hollis McLaren, Michael J. Pollard. Farmer captures and torments three escaped murderers. 90m. \$59.95. Gems.

The Way We Were. 1973. Barbra Streisand, Robert Redford; dir.

Sydney Pollack. Nostalgic love story of preppy writer, outspoken activist. 118m. (PG) 8 \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Where the Green Ants Dream. 1984. Bruce Spence, Wandjuk Marika, Roy Marika; wr/dir. Werner Herzog. Australian mining company plans to work grounds sacred to Aborigine tribes. 99m. \$59.95. Cinematheque.

HORROR

The Appointment. 1977. Edward Woodward, Jane Merrow. Father and daughter possessed. 90m. 8 \$39.95. Sony.

Billy the Kid vs. Dracula. 1966. Chuck Courtney, Melinda Plowman, John Carradine. Gunslinger discovers his uncle is notorious vampire. 75m. Hi \$59.95. Embassy.

Blood Link. 1986. Michael Moriarty. Doctor's recurring visions of murders lead him to culprit. 98m. (R) Hi \$79.95. Embassy.

Blue Blood. 1974. Oliver Reed, Fiona Lewis, Derek Jacobi. Satan-worshiping butler drives family to brink of insanity. 90m. \$59.95. Gems.

Cabinet of Dr. Caligari. 1919. B&W. Conrad Veidt, Lil Dagover. Sleepwalker under care of sinister physician. Silent, with

musical accompaniment. 69m. \$24.95. Cable.

Christine. 1983. Keith Gordon, John Stockwell; dir. John Carpenter. Possessed car, from Stephen King novel. 98m. (R) 8 St \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Claws. 1985. Jason Roberts, Sandra Prinsloo. Boy left alone on farm stalked by bear-like creature. 84m. \$59.95. World.

Dear, Dead Delilah. 1972. Agnes Moorehead, Will Geer, Michael Ansara. Family members with designs on buried fortune use axe to eliminate competition. 97m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Embassy.

Flesh Feast. 1970. Veronica Lake, Phil Philbin, Heather Hughes. Mad scientist unleashes maggots on faces of live subjects. 72m. \$39.95. World.

Home for the Holidays. 1972. Eleanor Parker, Sally Field, Jessica Walter, Julie Harris, Walter Brennan. Old man's second wife makes Christmas a nightmare. 78m. \$59.95. Vidmark.

The Hound of the Baskervilles. 1939. B&W. Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Richard Greene, Lionel Atwill, John Carradine. Holmes and Watson take steps to protect English lord from family curse. 80m. Hi \$29.98. Playhouse.

The Hunchback of Notre Dame. 1923. B&W. Lon Chaney, Patsy Ruth Miller. Deformed bellringer kidnaps dancer. Silent, with musical accompaniment. 99m. \$24.95. Cable.

If These Walls Could Speak. 1986. Host Vincent Price offers guided tours of palaces, castles with colorful histories. Ten cas.: Palace of Versailles, Hampton Court, Fushimi Castle, Chapultepec, Iolani Palace, Edinburgh Castle, Pompeii, Eucliffe Castle, Kronborg Castle. 60m. ea. \$19.95 ea. Gems.

In Search of...Vols. 1, 2. 1976-81. Leonard Nimoy hosts episodes of syndicated TV series on mysterious phenomena, three per cas. Vol 1: *Sherlock Holmes*, *Jack the Ripper*, *Tower of London Murders*. Vol. 2: *Eva Braun*, *Angel of Death*, *Nazi Plunder*. 75m. ea. \$29.95 ea. U.S.A.

Jesse James Meets Frankenstein's Daughter. 1965. Outlaw copes with lady doctor who loves him for his brain. 95m. Hi \$59.95. Embassy.

Night of the Bloody Transplant. Murder victim provides surgeon with heart he needs to revive ailing benefactor. 90m. (R) \$59.95. United.

The Phantom of the Opera. 1925. B&W/tinted. Lon Chaney, Mary Philbin. Fiend who lurks in tunnels beneath Paris Opera House abducts singer. Silent, with musical accompaniment. 85m. \$24.95. Cable.

Scream & Die. 1974. Andrea Allan, Karl Lanchbury. Model involved with unstable petty thief. 98m. (R) \$69.95. Lightning.

Shock. 1946. B&W. Vincent Price, Lynn Bari, Reed Hadley. Psychiatrist sets out to kill patient who saw him murder his wife. 70m. \$24.95. Cable.

Torture Train. 1983. Two girls going home for Christmas make mistake of sharing compartment with pair of ominous-looking men. 78m. (R) \$59.95. JEF.

Vampyr. 1931. B&W. Julian West, Sybille Schmitz; dir. Carl Dreyer. Vampire conceals identity by posing as old woman. 68m. sub. \$24.95. Cable.

Vultures. 1984. Stuart Whitman, Yvonne de Carlo, Aldo Ray, Jim Bailey. Competition to secure dying patriarch's estate. 101m. \$79.95. Prism.

White Zombie. 1932. B&W. Bela Lugosi, Madge Bellamy. Walking dead enlisted to labor in sugar mill. No kidding. 66m. \$24.95. Cable.

How-to

All About Bikes. 1986. Cyclist Bill Clauson illustrates how to fix flats, adjust steering and brakes, more. 150m. \$39.95. Step by Step Video (15 Laidley St., San Francisco, Calif. 94131; 415-826-7009).

Bodyband Workout. 1986. Tamilee Webb leads exercises using elastic resistance to tone and strengthen muscles. Comes with set of Bodybands, instruction booklet. 53m. \$39.95. Warner.

Donna Mills: The Eyes Have It. 1986. Beauty tips from star of TV's *Knots Landing*. 55m. Hi \$19.95. MCA.



Drug Free Kids: A Parent's Guide. 1986. Ken Howard, host; with Bonnie Franklin, Marla Gibbs, Jane Alexander. Sketches designed to help parents listen and communicate more effectively. 70m. \$39.95. Associates.

English Plus, a.k.a. Survival English. 1986. Instruction with Ana Luisa Walcutt. 55m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

The Everyday Gourmet Vols. 1, 2. 1986. Kathleen Perry. *Easy and Elegant Holiday Dinner Party, Winning Ways to Feed a Crowd.* 50m. ea. \$14.95. Kartes.

How to Plan the Perfect Wedding. 1986. Marion Ross of TV's *Happy Days* offers pointers on shopping for gowns, selecting a caterer, dividing expenses, more. 60m. \$29.95. Worldvision.

Miss Manners on Weddings: For Better, Not Worse. 1986. Advice from columnist Judith Martin, with supporting skits. 50m. \$19.95. Kartes.

The Rotation Diet. 1986. Regimen developed by Martin Katahn, director of Vanderbilt University Weight Management Program. With pamphlet of 21-day meal plan. 59m. Hi St \$19.95. New World.

You Pick the Winners. 1986. Dan Teta, host. Guide to handicapping horse races. 60m. \$29.95. Coastal.



Alice. 1986. Sophie Barjae, Jean-Pierre Cassell, Susannah York. Modern-day update of *Alice in Wonderland* involving a jogging White Rabbit pursued by hit men. 80m. \$59.95. Karl.

All Star Swing Festival. 1986. With Ella Fitzgerald; includes tribute to Louis Armstrong. 52m. LV St \$29.95. Vestron.

Ayer's Rock—Taka Jimura. 1986. Video essay on Australian tourist attraction Ayer's Rock, with jazz soundtrack. 38m. LV only St \$29.95. Pioneer.

B.B. King: Live at Nick's. 1986. "Sell My Monkey," "The Thrill Is Gone," "Love Me Tender." 60m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

Bon Jovi—Breakout. 1985 comp.

Heavy metal group in videos "Silent Night," "Only Lonely," more. 23m. 8 St \$19.95. Sony.

Bring On the Night. 1985. Dir. Michael Apted. Feature documentary on Sting's formation of new band. 97m. LV St \$29.95. Karl.

Carl Perkins: Blue Suede Shoes. 1986. Rockabilly jam session featuring Perkins, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, Dave Edmunds, others performing "Honey Don't," title tune, "Mean Woman Blues," more. 60m. Hi St D \$29.95. MCA.

Chess Moves. 1986 comp. Five videos created to accompany songs from London musical *Chess*. \$19.95. MusicVision.

Concert Aid. 1986. Performance of Beethoven's fifth staged to raise funds for famine relief in Ethiopia and the Sudan; Sir George Solti conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra. 40m. Hi St \$19.95. Kultur.

Country Comes Alive. 1986 comp. Videos "Morning Desire" (Kenny Rogers), "Lost in the '50s Tonight" (Ronnie Milsap), "There's No Way" (Alabama), more. 30m. Hi St D \$19.95. MusicVision.

Funny Lady. 1975. Barbra Streisand, James Caan, Omar Sharif, Roddy McDowall, Ben Vereen; dir. Herbert Ross. More on life of comedienne Fanny Brice. 137m. (PG) Hi \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

George Clinton with Parliament/Funkadelic—The Mothership Connection. 1986. "Night of the Thumpasorous People," "Atomic Dog," "Get Off Your Ass and Jam," five more. 30m. Hi St \$16.95. Sony.

Hall & Oates Video Collection: 7 Big Ones. 1984 comp. Includes "Say It Isn't So," "Maneater," "I Can't Go for That." LV St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

The Harvest Jazz Series. 1986. Steve Allen hosts three-cas. series highlighting weekend concert staged at Paul Masson Vineyards. *Alto Madness:* saxophonists Richie Cole, Stan Getz. Remaining titles feature Dexter Gordon, Bobby Hutcherson, McCoy Tyner. 60m. ea. Hi St \$29.95 ea. Sony.

Hear 'n' Aid—The Sessions/Concert for Famine Relief. 1986. Documentary on recording of



benefit record by members of heavy metal groups King Kobra, Dokken, Quiet Riot, Ted Nugent, others. 30m. 8 St \$16.95. Sony.

Heart: Video 45. 1986 comp. Videos "What About Love?," "Nev-er," "These Dreams," "Nothin' at All." 18m. Hi St \$16.95. Sony.

Henry Mancini and Friends with Robert Goulet and Vikki Carr. 49m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

Jazz in America with Max Roach. 1981. Recorded live at Blues Alley, D.C. 60m. Hi St \$19.95. Embassy.

Jazz in America with Dizzy Gillespie. 1981. Swing/bebop trumpeter in concert recorded at Redondo Beach, California. 60m. Hi St \$19.95. Embassy.

Jimi Hendrix—Johnny B. Goode. 1986 comp. Archival concert footage; renditions of "Are You Experienced?," "All Along the Watchtower," "The Star-Spangled Banner," more. 26m. Hi St \$16.95. Sony.

Joan Armatrading—Track Record. 1986. Documentary with footage from Australia concerts, videos "Temptation," "Kind Words." 90m. Hi \$29.95. A&M.

John Lennon Live in New York City. 1986. Madison Square Garden benefit concert, filmed August 30, 1972. With Yoko Ono and the Plastic Ono Elephant's Memory Band. 55m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

Keith Jarrett: Last Solo. 1986. Jazz pianist in solo performance taped at Kan-i-Hoken Hall, Tokyo. 92m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

La Gran Scena Opera Company. 1986. Parodies of great operas. With Luis Russinyol, Gabriella Tonnoziti-Casseruola, Ansonia Ramada. \$59.95. VAI.

The Last Radio Station. 1986. Final entry in four-cas. "Motown Video Originals" release: singles from '60s, '70s incorporated into story of future world where radio is nearly extinct. 60m. Hi St \$29.95. MCA.

Lee Ritenour—Rit Special. 1986. Concert recorded June '84 at Concord Pavilion, Calif. 75m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

Martha Graham: Three Contemporary Classics. 1984. Collection of dance performances recorded in Denmark. \$59.95. 85m. VAI.

Mr. Mister: Videos from the Real World. 1986 comp. "Broken Wings," "Kyrie," "Is It Love." 14m. Hi St D \$14.95. MusicVision.

The Monkees in "Dance, Monkees, Dance" and "Hitting the High Seas." 1967. Episodes of TV show; the group performs "I'm A Believer," "Daydream Believer." 50m. Hi \$19.95. MusicVision.

The Monkees in "Monkees vs. Machine" and "Don't Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth." 1967. More TV episodes featuring "Last Train to Clarksville," "Papa Gene's Blues." 50m. Hi \$19.95. MusicVision.

Motown's Mustang. 1986. Mini-movie following '64 Ford Mustang through several owners and 20 years of Motown singles. 43m. LV St CX \$24.95. Pioneer.

MTV's Closet Classics. 1986 comp. Jimi Hendrix, the Who, the Beach Boys, T. Rex, Cream, Ike and Tina Turner, the Grateful Dead, others in 15 vintage video clips. 60m. Hi \$29.95. MusicVideo.

The Music Man. 1962. Robert Preston, Shirley Jones, Buddy Hackett, Paul Ford, Hermione

Gingold, Ronny Howard. Con artist persuades town officials to hire him as director of boys' band. Score by Meredith Wilson. 151m. (G) Hi St cc \$24.98. LV St CX cc \$39.98. Warner.

One Night With Blue Note Vol. 1. 1985. Jazz concert celebrating rebirth of Blue Note record label. Herbie Hancock hosts; with Bobby Hutcherson (vibes), Art Blakey (drums), Bennie Wallace (tenor sax), Stanley Jordan (guitar). 55m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

Pas de Deux. 1984. With Patricia McBride, Michal Denard. Seven pieces including *Blue Bird*, *La Sylphide*, Act III of *Sleeping Beauty*. 91m. \$49.95. Val.

Patti LaBelle—Look to the Rainbow Tour. 1986. "Lady Marmalade," "You Are My Friend," "Come What May," more. 68m. LV St CX \$29.95. Pioneer.

Peter Tosh Live. 1986. Concert performance from African tour featuring "Get Up Stand Up," "Where You Gonna Run," more. 55m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

Ratt: The Video. 1985 comp. Videos "Wanted Man," "You Think You're Tough," more, plus interviews, concert footage. 37m. LV St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

Reggae Tribute. 1986. Highlights of fourth Reggae Sunsplash Festival, dedicated to Bob Marley. Appearances by Black Uhuru, Steel Pulse. 60m. Hi St \$29.95. Sony.

Rock 'n' Rule. 1983 anim. Mythical tale featuring music and voices of Debbie Harry, Lou Reed, Cheap Trick, Iggy Pop, Earth Wind & Fire. 85m. LV St \$34.95. MGM/UA.

Sounds Magnificent: The Story of the Symphony. 1982. BBC-TV series featuring Andre Previn conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in popular concert works. Six cas.: *Haydn and Mozart*, *Beethoven*, *Berlioz*, *Brahms*, *Tchaikovsky*, *Shostakovich*. 90m. ea. Hi St \$59.95 ea. Home Vision.

Stanley Jordan—Magic Touch. Jazz selections "When You Wish Upon a Star," "Touch of Blue," "Jumpin' Jack," "The Lady in My Life." 19m. 8 D \$16.95. Sony.

Staring at the Sea—The Images. 1986 comp. Videos by the Cure. Includes "Killing an Arab," "In-between Days," "Close to Me." 82m. Hi St \$24.98. Elektra.

Starship: Video Hoopla. 1986 comp. Videos "We Built This City," "Sara," "Tomorrow Doesn't Matter Tonight." 14m. Hi St D \$14.95. MusicVision.

Supertramp: Brother Where You Bound. 1985. Pop-rock group in videos of title song, "Cannonball," "Better Days." 30m. LV St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

Tony Bennett Sings. 1985. "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," "This Can't Be Love," "For Once In My Life," more. 48m. 8 St \$29.95. Sony.

U2—Live at Red Rocks—Under a Blood Red Sky. 1986. Irish rock band in concert taped at Colorado amphitheatre. With "Sunday, Bloody Sunday," "New Year's Day," "Gloria," "I Will Follow." 55m. RE Hi St \$19.95 (\$29.95 after 1/1/87). MusicVision.

Whitney Houston—The #1 Video Hits. 1986 comp. "How Will I Know," "You Give Good Love," "Saving All My Love for You," "The Greatest Love of All." 18m. LV St CX \$12.99. Pioneer.

Whodini: Back in Black. 1986 comp. Rap videos "Escape (I Need a Break)," "Freaks Come Out at Night," "Big Mouth," "Funky Beat." 18m. Hi St D \$14.95. MusicVision.

Whoopee! 1930. Eddie Cantor, Eleanor Hunt, Paul Gregory, Betty Grable. Hypochondriac moves west to convalesce. Choreog. Busby Berkeley. 93m. Hi \$39.95. Embassy.

Yankee Doodle Dandy. 1942. colorized 1986. James Cagney, Joan Leslie, Walter Huston, Irene Manning; dir. Michael Curtiz. Life of entertainer George M. Cohan. 126m. Hi \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

pearances by Lee Trevino, Sean Connery. 30m. \$29.95. Morris.

Winning Softball. 1986. Top players Tom Beall, Don Arndt, Russell Bradley, Buddy Slater offer pointers on hitting, defense, pitching. 45m. \$24.95. Morris.



Chesty: Tribute to a Legend. 1970. Host/nars. John Wayne, John Ford; dir. Ford. Salute to Marine commander Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, with footage of '69 Marine Corps tribute, clips from earlier Ford war documentaries. 48m. \$49.95. 28m. \$29.95. Creative.

The Cousteau Odyssey Treasures. 1977-82. Best of TV series exploring natural world. Ten cas.: *Blind Prophets of Easter Island*, *Calypto's Search for Atlantis*, *Calypto's Search for the Britannic*, *Clipperton: The Island Time Forgot*, *Diving for Roman Plunder* (RE), *Lost Relics of the Sea*, *Mediterranean: Cradle or Coffin?*, *The Nile* (RE), *Time Bomb at 50 Fathoms*, *The Warm-Blooded Sea: Mammals of the Deep*. Approx. 60m. ea. (exc. *Atlantis, Nile*, 116m.) VHS only \$24.98 ea. Warner.

The Fakers. Look at fraudulent psychics and how they stage apparently miraculous events. \$49.95. Vanguard.

Glory Machines. 1986. Color/B&W. Documentary on American railroading, 1928-'52, with over 220 train runbys. 64m. \$69.95. Herron Rail Services (mail order only: 2016 N. Village Ave., Tampa Fla., 33612; 813-932-3887.)

Great Crimes of the Century, Vol. 1. 1986. Look at cases of Charles Manson, the Boston Strangler, others. 58m. \$39.95. MPI.

Liberty Weekend—Commemorative Edition. 1986. Highlights of ABC-TV coverage of celebrations surrounding Statue of Liberty's 100th birthday. 45m. \$19.95. Vestron.

On Being Gay. 1986. Evangelist Brian McNaught talks about common misconceptions of homosexuality, describes his early life. 80m. \$39.95. TRB Productions (Box 2362, Boston, Mass. 02107).



Doctor Who: Revenge of the Cybermen. 1983. Tom Baker. Episode from British TV series: professor roams time and space in police call booth. 92m. Hi cc \$19.98. Playhouse.

Enemy Mine. 1985. Louis Gossett, Jr., Dennis Quaid. Alien warrior, Earth astronaut stranded on hostile planet. 108m. (PG-13) LV St cc \$34.98. CBS/Fox.



The Best of Women's Championship Wrestling Vol. 1. 1986. Extravaganza featuring ten-woman "battle royale," with Candi Divine, Debbie Combs, Despina Mantagas, tag team Daughters of Darkness, Lady Satan, others. 90m. \$39.95. Gems.

Golf the Miller Way. 1986. Instruction with Johnny Miller; ap-



The Cousteau Odyssey Treasures



Picasso, the Man and His Work Vols. 1, 2. 1975. Exploration of artist's career featuring home movies, private photos. *Part I:* 1881-1937; *Part II:* 1938-1973. 45m. ea. \$39.95 ea./\$79.95 packaged set. V.I.E.W.

Psychic Confession. Filmed testimony of mystic James Hydrick

revealing tricks of his bogus trade. \$49.95. Vanguard.

Queen Elizabeth II—60 Glorious Years. 1986. TV documentary on British matriarch's life and reign. 60m. \$29.95. MPI.

The Secret Lives of the British Prime Ministers. 1986. Their

fears, concerns, weaknesses and passions. Seven cas.: *Gladstone, Wellington, Lloyd George, Disraeli, Pitt, MacDonald, Asquith.* 60m. ea. \$24.95 ea. Roach.

The Statue of Liberty. 1984. Nar. David McCullough. Story of statue's design and construction. 60m. LV \$29.95. Vestron.

Stripper. 1985. Portraits of five women competing in First Annual Stripper's Convention. 90m. (R) Hi St \$79.98. Key.

Washington D.C.—A Capital Experience. 1986. Guided tour with stops at monuments, Smithsonian, museums, more. 30m. St \$39.95. JFW.

PROGRAMMING SOURCES

A&M Video, 1416 N. La Brea Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90028 (213-469-2411).

Video Associates, 5419 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90027 (213-463-3255).

Cable Films, P.O. Box 7171, Kansas City, Mo. 64113 (913-362-2804).

CBS/Fox Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-819-3200).

CC Studios, 389 Newtown Turnpike, Weston, Conn. 06883 (203-226-4666).

Charter: see *Embassy.*

Cinematheque Collection: see *Media.*

Coastal Home Video, 2151 Michelson Dr., Suite 278, Irvine, Calif. 92715 (714-476-8911).

Creative Ventures, Inc., P.O. Box 16903, Jackson, Miss. 39236 (601-366-3563).

Walt Disney Home Video, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, Calif. 91521 (818-840-1111).

Elektra Entertainment, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-848-7200).

Embassy Home Entertainment, 1901 Ave. of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-553-3600).

Entertainment Programs International, 15635 Saticoy St., Suite H, Van Nuys, Calif. 91406 (818-909-0233).

Family Home Entertainment: see *IVE.*

Force Video: see *Lightning.*

Video Gems, 731 N. LaBrea Ave., Box 38188, Los Angeles, Calif. 90038 (213-938-2385).

HBO/Cannon Video, 1370 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-977-8990).

Home Vision, 5547 N. Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60640-1199 (800-826-3456; in Ill. 312-878-2600 ext. 336).

Image Entertainment, 6311 Romaine St., Hollywood, Calif. 90038 (213-468-8867, 800-421-4585).

Video Images, Box C, Sandy Hook, Conn. 06482 (800-243-0987).

International Video Entertainment: see *U.S.A.*

JEFF Films, 143 Hickory Hill Circle, Osterville, Mass. 02655 (617-428-7198).

JFW Productions, Ltd., 13949 W. Colfax Ave., Suite 100, Golden, Colorado 80401 (303-234-0532).

Karl/Lorimar Home Video, 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, Calif. 92714 (714-474-0355).

Kartes Video Communications, 7225 Woodland Dr., Indianapolis, Ind. 46278 (800-331-1387).

Key Video: see *CBS/Fox.*

Kultur International Films, Ltd., 121 Hwy. 36, West Long Branch, N.J. 07764 (201-229-2343).

Lightning Video: see *Vestron.*

Magic Window Video: see *RCA/Columbia.*

Master Arts Video: see *EPI.*

MCA Home Video, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Calif. 91608 (818-508-4315).

Media Home Entertainment, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

MGM/UA Home Video, 1350 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-408-0600).

Monterey Home Video: see *IVE.*

Morris Video, 413 Ave. G #1, P.O. Box 443, Redondo Beach, Calif. 90277 (213-379-2414, 213-374-4984).

MPI Home Video, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forest, Ill. 60452 (312-687-7881).

Vestron MusicVideo: see *Vestron.*

MusicVision: see *RCA/Columbia.*

New World Video, 1440 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025 (213-444-8100).

The Nostalgia Merchant: see *Media.*

Paramount Home Video, 5555 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90038-3197 (213-468-5000).

Pioneer Artists, 200 W. Grand Ave., Montvale, N.J. 07645 (201-573-1122).

Playhouse Video: see *CBS/Fox.*

Prism Entertainment, 1875 Century Pk. East, Suite 1010, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-277-3270).

Republic Pictures Home Video, 12636 Beatrice St., Box 66930, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066-0930. (213-306-4040).

RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, 2901 W. Alameda Ave., Burbank, Calif. 91505 (818-906-1722, 818-954-4950).

Children's Video Recess: see *EPI.*

RKO HomeVideo, 1900 Ave. of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-277-3133).

Hal Roach Studio Films Classics, 1600 N. Fairfax Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90046 (213-850-0525).

Scholastic/Lorimar Home Video, 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, Calif. 92714 (714-474-0355).

Sony Video Software, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-371-5800, 800-874-4164).

Unicorn Video, 20822 Dearborn St., Chatsworth, Calif. 91311 (818-407-1333).

United Home Video, 4111 So. Darlington St., Suite 600, Tulsa, Okla. 74135 (918-622-6460, 800-331-4077).

U.S.A. Home Video, 21800 Burbank Blvd. #300, Box 4062, Woodland Hills, Calif. 91365-4062 (818-888-3040, 1-800-423-7455).

Video Arts International, Box 153, Ansonia Sta., New York, N.Y. 10023 (212-799-7798).

Vanguard Video: see *United.*

Vestron Video, 60 Long Ridge Rd., P.O. Box 4000, Stamford, Conn. 06907 (203-968-0000).

Vidmark Entertainment, 2450 Wilshire Blvd., Suite #1, Santa Monica, Calif. 90403 (2131-829-4359).

Video International Entertainment World, Inc., 34 E. 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010 (212-674-5550).

Warner Home Video, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91522 (818-954-6000).

World Video Pictures, 12401 Wilshire Blvd. 102, Los Angeles, Calif. 90025 (213-820-6100).

Worldvision Home Video, 660 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10021 (212-832-3838).

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until he played football**

Corey Haim stars as 14-year-old Lucas Blue in this roasting, romantic teenage comedy. Lucas is the school team's star, who's into insects (and himself). Maggie the cheerleader (Kerri Green)

Lucas wants her love but Maggie wants the captain of the football team (Charlie Sheen). So Lucas suits up and goes out for the squad in his and her's junior year. And wins the respect of the entire school instead.

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Music by DAVE GRUSIN • Director of Photography REYNALDO VILLALOBOS

Produced by DAVID NICKSAY • Written and Directed by DAVID SELTZER

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BERGER - BRAITHWAITE VIDEOTESTS

November 1986

RCA VMT400 VHS VCR with Digital Video Effects

Hitachi VM-5000A VHS HQ Camcorder

Minolta CR-3000S AF Compact VHS HQ Camcorder

Magnavox RG 729OBH 27-Inch Designer Monitor/Receiver

RCA VCR with Digital Effects



If you're thinking of getting one of those new digital TVs because you like to watch two pictures at the same time, wait until you see the

VMT400. RCA's new Digital Video Effects VCR can do those same tricks for a lot less, plus you get a VCR to sweeten the bargain.

The word "digital" is being used these days almost as bait. It may honestly describe some of the circuitry in many devices, but unless the manufacturer tells you which circuits and what they do, it may well be a false lure. Not all parts of the signal chain between the camera and the picture tube can yet be economically put into digital form. For example, if TV were broadcast in digital form no current TV could decode the broadcasts. We would need special sets to receive them and would have to throw away hundreds of millions of existing TVs. So analog broadcasting will be with us for the foreseeable future.

The first standards for professional digital VCRs were set earlier this year and are not yet widely used. Meeting the standards is expensive, and it may be years before VCRs that record pictures and sound in digital form are available at consumer prices. However, it is possible to convert the analog signal into digital form for processing and special effects. That's what current "digital" TVs and VCRs do. Toshiba was the first to deliver a "digital TV" ("Videotest," May 1985). But, although Toshiba and NEC have announced forthcoming VCRs with digital circuitry, RCA may well be the first company to get one to stores.

RCA is also setting a useful precedent by calling its machine a VCR with digital video effects, instead of a digital VCR. Some

manufacturers insist on the latter, even though their new VCRs will not record or play digital signals. We prefer RCA's phrasing. Let's save the term "digital VCR" for the machines we'll eventually see that record and play back tapes with digital signals.

RCA's VMT400 uses an analog-to-digital (A-to-D, or A/D) converter to transform analog signals to digital form, a 2.4 megabit dynamic random access memory (DRAM), and a digital-to-analog (D/A) converter to transform the analog TV signal to the digital domain—storing or processing it—and recreating a recognizable picture. These steps let the VCR deliver the following effects: picture-in-picture, the ability to move the inset to any corner, picture swap, rock-steady still frame, distortion-free slow motion, cleaner search, and the ability to freeze the action from the tape or a broadcast, digitize, and colorize the picture.

To date, digital TV has yielded picture-in-picture, picture movement, picture swap, freeze frame, and teletext (in one Zenith model). But RCA's new VCR delivers more than the current crop of digital TVs. You can play back a tape with an off-air picture inset, or watch off-air with a

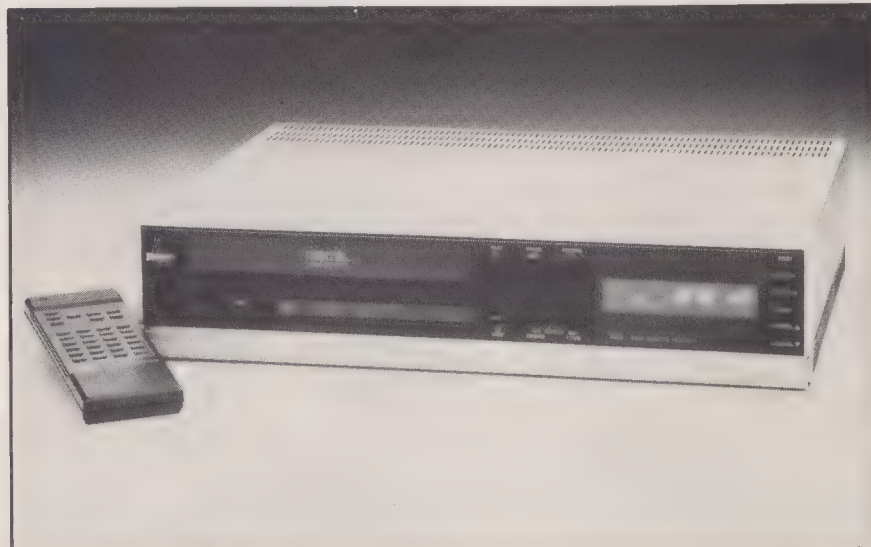
playback inset. The inset is one-twelfth the size of the full picture. You can use only one special effect at a time, however; the audio is whatever accompanies the full-size picture.

The other basic VCR features are equivalent to a mid-priced model with three video heads for good special effects, search, still, and variable slow motion (made crystal clear in this instance by the digital circuitry), auto rewind, power off from rewind, a cable-ready tuner, and a four-program/one-year timer.

Description. The VMT400 is silver gray with a black face and pedestal. It weighs 17.2 pounds and measures 3-7/8 inches high by 17-1/8 inches wide by 12-3/4 inches deep. It is a front loader, and the top, bottom, and sides are bare but for air vents.

The front panel is less cluttered than you might expect. Near the top left is the cassette hatch with the digital effects legends. Below is a row of skinny, unobtrusive buttons for power, eject (with a cassette inside indicator), TV/VCR (also with an indicator), and four more for the digital effects.

First comes the picture-in-picture button. On the first push, it turns the input picture into an inset. A second push swaps



RCA VMT400 VHS VCR

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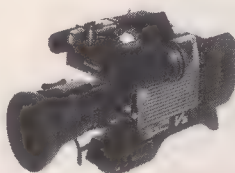
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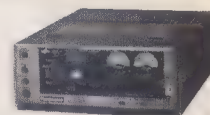
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Videotests

the main picture with the inset. A third push returns you to the playback picture. The freeze button, which comes next, grabs and holds a still picture while a tape or a live program continues. The action returns at a second touch of the button. Further right is the digital video effects button. On the first touch, it produces a mosaic effect, on the second a posterized or colorized picture and, on the third touch, a normal picture again. The last button in the group, Pix Move, shifts the inset from one quadrant to the next in a counterclockwise direction.

The right half of the panel starts with two rows of three large buttons. Play, pause, and record are above stop, rewind (reverse search), and fast forward (forward search). A display to their right shows the clock/counter, the tape speed, the program, the channel, and abbreviations for all the VCR functions except stop. At far left are the start, length, counter/clock swap, counter reset, channel up, and channel down controls. In all, a really simple front panel.

The hidden compartment in the pedestal is equally simple. It has a button to cycle

through the three record speeds, a slide switch for tuner/line, a thumbwheel for normal tracking, and four buttons to set the scan tuning presets. Of these, the first sets the memory in select or lock mode. The next simplifies the scan tuning by programming all the active channels with one touch. The remaining two let you add or erase from the sequence to modify it to your tastes. And that's it: five buttons, a slide switch, and a thumbwheel.

The rear panel has jacks for video and mono audio input and output at the top left in a large depression. Below are screw terminals for the UHF input and output. To the right of the video/audio jacks are F connectors for VHF input and output, along with switches for the normal/cable tuning sequence, the channel 3/4 VHF output, and vertical lock. At the lower right is the power cord.

The remote control, powered by two AA cells, has a signal sent indicator at the front of its top panel, and buttons in a shallow depression. Furthest forward are controls for power, TV/VCR, play, pause, record, rewind (search), fast forward (search), and stop. In a second group are buttons for frame advance, slow, slow speed up and down, slow tracking up and down, program, and clear. Also on hand are a 10-digit keypad for direct access plus buttons for channel up and down and, in a gray box, buttons for picture-in-picture freeze, the digital effects, and Pix Move.

Operation. Despite its high tech inards, using the VMT400 is a breeze. Because it's a mid-priced machine, it would normally have less-confusing controls than top-of-the-line models. RCA is also well known for simplifying VCR controls; this is no exception. For example, all the digital video effects are accomplished with four buttons carried by both the set and the remote. The other controls are those you'd find on a basic VCR, plus frame advance and slow on the remote.

Performance. This is the first VCR with digital enhancements we've tested. Freeze, still, and slow motion pictures are noise-free but some show a very slight vertical jitter. The frozen picture offers about the same resolution as the moving picture, but attempts to measure the various signal to noise ratios yielded numbers much worse than our eyes led us to believe. A closer examination of the noise showed traces of timing pulses too small to see in the picture. They falsely affected the S/N readings. The inset had a horizontal resolution of about 200 lines. Its S/N could not be measured separately.

On the standard picture, we measured a horizontal resolution of 240 lines with a video S/N of 41 decibels, unweighted, and 49 dB, weighted, with sag compensation. Chroma AM S/N was 44 dB at SP, dropping to 38 dB at LP, and 33.7 dB at SLP. Chroma PM S/N was 38.7 dB at SP, dropping to 32.7 dB and 32.3 dB at LP and SLP speeds, respectively. Despite the lower

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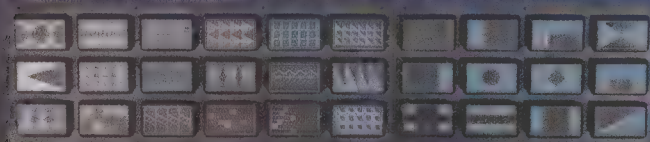


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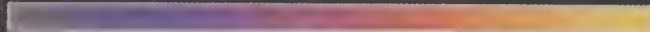
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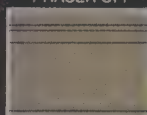
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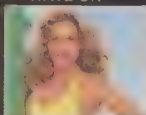
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Videotests

than normal S/N ratios, the picture qualities as very good visually, and good by the measurements. We normally put a bit more faith in our eyes than in measurements.

Its monaural linear audio is excellent by linear track standards, with a 3 dB frequency response of 80 to 12,000 Hz at SP, 80 to 8000 Hz at LP, and 80 to 6300 Hz at SLP. Using a 10 dB cutoff extends the low-frequency response to 31.5 Hz (an octave and a third) at all speeds, but extends high-frequency response by one-third of an octave at each speed. Audio S/N was 43 dB and

the total harmonic distortion was 1.3 percent. If you're already spoiled by stereo and Hi-Fi audio, you might wish RCA had added the digital features to a high-end model first, but you'll have to wait for that.

Conclusion. The RCA VMT400 has no suggested list price but is expected to sell for about \$700. That means you'll be paying a premium of about \$200 to \$250 for the digital special effects—about the same as these effects cost in a digital TV. But since its base price is cheaper, you can enjoy the digital features on the VMT400 for less than a comparably equipped digital TV

would cost.

The reasonable price, the very good picture, excellent ease of operation, and excellent mono linear audio add up to a very attractive VCR that we recommend highly.

Test Report: RCA VMT400 VHS HQ VCR With Digital Video Effects

DATA

Date of test: August 1986

Suggested retail price: open, \$700
comparable value

Weight: 17.2 lbs.

Dimensions: 3-7/8 x 17-1/8 x 12-11/16
inches (h x w x d)

Power requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz.

Power consumption: 48 W.

Tape format: VHS HQ

Tape speeds: SP, LP, SLP

Play speed select: automatic

Video heads: 3

Still frame: digital

Frame advance: on remote control
only, digital

Slow motion: 1/5x to 1/30x, variable
from remote only; separate control on
remote, touch play during still on VCR

Speed play: none

Rapid search: see Cue and review

Cue & review: 3x, SP; 6x, LP; 9x, SLP

Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: approx. 5
minutes for T-120 cassette

Remote pause: no

Remote: IR wireless with buttons for
power, TV/VCR, play, pause, record, re-
wind (search), fast forward (search), stop,
frame advance, slow, slow speed up and
down, slow tracking up and down, pro-
gram, clear, picture-in-picture, freeze,
digital video effects, Pix Move, 10-digit
keypad, and channel up and down

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4

Counter memory: stop at 0000

Program start locator/index/cue: no

Audio dub: no

Video dub: no

Auto rewind: yes

Linear audio: mono

Hi-Fi audio: none

Tuning method: quartz frequency syn-
thesis

Channel selectors: up/down scan on

VCR; scan plus direct access on remote

Preset method: auto scan programming
plus add/erase from scan sequence

Broadcast tuning range: 2 to 13, 14
to 83

Cable tuning range: 2 to 13, A to I, J
to W, W+1 to W+12

AFT: yes

Channel lock: yes

Timer: 4 programs, 1 year

Auto channel-change: yes

Accessories: remote control with batter-
ies, antenna cables and matching trans-
former

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 240 lines meas-
ured

S/N, video luminance: 41 dB, un-
weighted, 49 dB, weighted with sag com-
pensation

S/N, chroma AM: 44 dB, SP; 38 dB,
LP, 33.7 dB, SLP

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
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126 Video November 1986

A collage of various electronic devices including stereos, VCRs, camcorders, and computers, arranged on a floor with a grid pattern. The devices are scattered across the frame, with some appearing to be floating or falling. The floor has a light-colored grid pattern. The overall scene suggests a collection of old or discarded electronics.

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Video Plus, Cliffside Park
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Video Biz, Lake Hiawatha
Video Biz, New Brunswick
Video Unlimited of Linden, Linden
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Videotests

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The recorder section at the rear occupies the most space. At its back are an external power jack and grooves for attaching the battery. The battery release is the only working part on the side against your face. A soft pad cushions your cheek and four tiny rubber pads prevent furniture marring when you use it as a playback deck.

On the outer side are the cassette hatch

with a tiny window, the tracking control, a multi-pin jack for A/V out, and mini jacks for earphone and record pause. The bottom is bare but for the tripod socket and a padded shoulder rest.

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You can get one shot auto focusing by pushing in on the slider switch when it's in manual. Above the support is the lens with its manual and zoom focus rings. A tiny button on the zoom ring lever turns on the macro focusing range. As with most power

zoom lenses, you can zoom out of the macro range but not into it. The remaining camera controls are on the left, just behind the lens. The top row has the review button, which shows a few seconds of the previous take, and the auto/manual white balance switch.

Below is the manual white balance slider with approximate positions for incandescent, fluorescent, direct sun, and cloudy lighting conditions. Its range is from about 2700 kelvins at the incandescent end to 7000 kelvins on the cloudy end. In the next row is a button that cycles through the date, date and time, time, and a clear frame when recording. Also present is the auto/manual iris switch with a slider for manual fades.

Video buffs tend to prefer either manual or automatic fades. Manual fades require a steady hand but their speed is under your control; automatic fades are smoother but the fixed speed may be inappropriate for the subject or mood. Two hidden compartments below these switches have time and date controls, and the batteries that power the clock.

The supplied AC adapter/battery charger is cleverly designed to slip onto the battery grooves at the back of the camcorder instead of the battery. It also carries a set of grooves so the battery may in turn be slipped onto its back. A switch with

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Videotests

indicator lets you use it to power the camcorder or charge the supplied battery. There is no power switch but there is a power indicator. A little support flips down so it will stand upright when on the camcorder. Battery life and recharge time are both about two hours.

Other supplied accessories include an RF output adapter, an A/V output cable, an A/V input adapter and cable, an antenna cable and transformer, an earphone, clock batteries, a carrying handle, and a shoulder strap.

Operation. Using the VM-5000A is straightforward. The VTR/camera switch determines its operating mode. In the camera position, all the playback controls are inoperative, and your only concerns are the run/pause and zoom controls if the automatic options are chosen. If you switch to manual control of focus, iris or white balance, you'll have to worry about those chores, too. You can see what you're doing in the black & white viewfinder, except for white balance (WB) changes. We strongly recommend using a color monitor if you operate the WB manually.

In VTR mode the camera controls are inoperative and the recorder controls act like those of a simple VCR. Play, stop, and pause functions are obvious, and search is activated by the fast forward and rewind

They are among the best measured for HQ portables and just a little below those for table models. We rate overall picture quality as very good compared to other VHS HQ machines we've measured.

The linear track audio frequency response was 80 to 12,000 Hertz at the -3 dB point with an audio S/N of 38 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 1.7 percent. These measurements are between excellent and very good by linear track standards.

Conclusion. Without question the Hitachi VM-5000A is among the best VHS camcorders we've measured. Some may prefer the Compact VHS machines for their weight advantage, but full-sized VHS machines, like this, outperform them. If we had to choose a VHS camcorder, this Hitachi would certainly be among our top choices.

Test Report: Hitachi VM-5000A VHS HQ Camcorder

DATA

Date of test: August 1986

Suggested retail price: \$1695

Weight: 5.5 pounds

Dimensions: 7-5/8 x 6-1/2 x 14-1/8 inches (h x w x d)

Power requirements: 12 VDC

Power consumption: 9.5 W, nominal

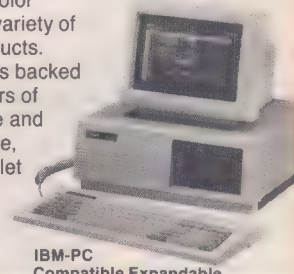
Image sensor: 2/3-inch MOS solid state

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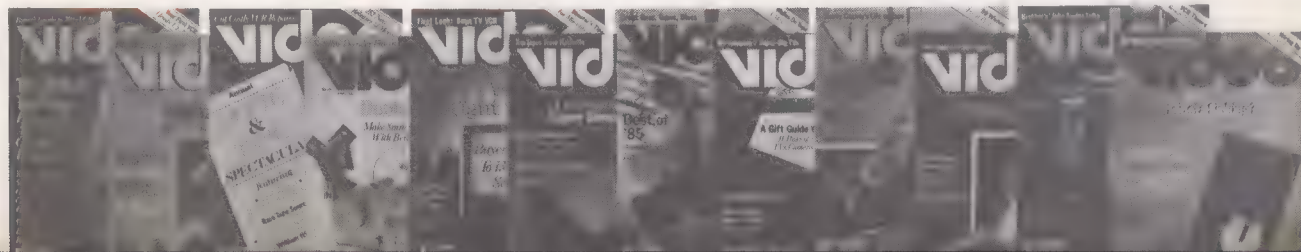
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auto rewind.

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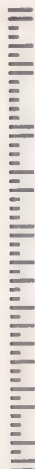
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In VTR mode the camera controls are inoperative and the recorder controls act like those of a simple VCR. Play, stop, and pause functions are obvious, and search is activated by the fast forward and rewind controls during play. We call this type of search, without separate buttons, cue and review. The record function also operates in a standard fashion: the record and play buttons must be pushed simultaneously. An unexpected wrinkle is that you must replace the EVF with A/V input adapter. The EVF becomes inoperative. If you want to see what you're recording you'll need an external monitor. That's annoying.

Optional accessories that make the Hitachi easier to use include a hard carrying case, a wired remote pause switch, a car battery cord, extra one and two-hour batteries, and an AC charger that does not act as a AC adapter. Although the manual is not as detailed as some, the VM-5000A's controls are obvious and convenient. We rate ease of operation as excellent.

Performance. All HQ machines, including this, extend their white clip levels (WCL) to qualify for HQ status. You can see its effect on the screen in the form of less ragged edges around objects. Hitachi does not disclose which, if any, of the other three HQ circuit enhancements are included in the VM-5000A, and there's no accurate way to test for their possible presence.

Horizontal resolution measured in at 250 lines. The video (luminance) signal to noise ratio measured 44.4 decibels unweighted and 47 dB, weighted, slightly below the best table models but still outstanding. Chroma AM S/N was 40.8 dB, and chroma PM S/N was 36.4 dB, both measured. Hitachi does not publish these specifications but they are quite close to measurements made by Hitachi for its own use.

They are among the best measured for HQ portables and just a little below those for table models. We rate overall picture quality as very good compared to other VHS HQ machines we've measured.

The linear track audio frequency response was 80 to 12,000 Hertz at the -3 dB point with an audio S/N of 38 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 1.7 percent. These measurements are between excellent and very good by linear track standards.

Conclusion. Without question the Hitachi VM-5000A is among the best VHS camcorders we've measured. Some may prefer the Compact VHS machines for their weight advantage, but full-sized VHS machines, like this, outperform them. If we had to choose a VHS camcorder, this Hitachi would certainly be among our top choices.

Test Report: Hitachi VM-5000A VHS HQ Camcorder

DATA

Date of test: August 1986

Suggested retail price: \$1695

Weight: 5.5 pounds

Dimensions: 7-5/8 x 6-1/2 x 14-1/8 inches (h x w x d)

Power requirements: 12 VDC

Power consumption: 9.5 W, nominal

Image sensor: 2/3-inch MOS solid state

Lens: f1.2, 6x (11.5-69 mm) power zoom with macro

Filter diameter: 52 mm

Minimum focusing distance: 4 feet excluding macro range of 1 cm from lens

Field at closest focus: 4-1/2 x 6 inches, tele

Minimum illumination: 7 lux, rated; 7 lux delivers 38 IRE units, 11 lux for 50 IRE units, measured

Auto focus: switchable to manual with one-shot AF capability

White balance: continuous automatic switchable to manual with continuous slider

Iris: automatic switchable to manual with continuous slider range including fully closed position

Sensitivity: single range

Viewfinder: electronic with onscreen indicators for time, date, counter/time remaining, and battery condition

Viewfinder controls: magnifier optical focus, contrast, brightness, and electrical focus

Auto fade: no, manual iris may be used for manual fade

VCR controls: all—play, stop, rewind, fast forward, pause, counter reset and memory, eject, and VTR/camera

Microphone: directional, electret condenser type

Jacks: multi-pin A/V out, multi-pin EVF (doubles for A/V input with supplied adapter), earphone mini jack, rec/pause mini jack, and DC input accessible when battery is removed

Tape format: VHS HQ

Tape speeds: SP

Still frame: yes, with small noise bar

Frame advance: no

Slow motion: no

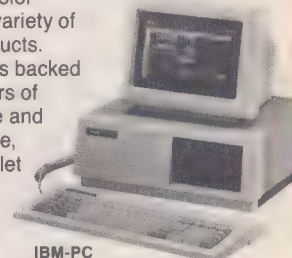
Speed play: no

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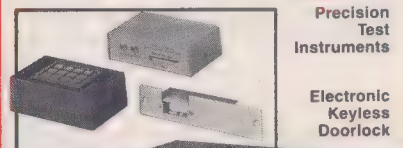
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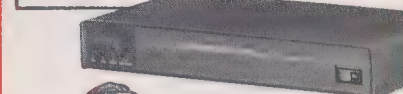
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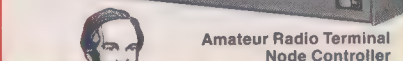
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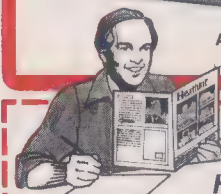
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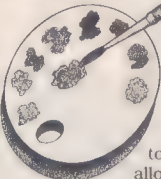
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Videotests

Cue & review: 3x, forward and reverse, with small noise bar

Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: 6-1/2 minutes for T-120

Remote pause: yes

Remote: wired, optional

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4, switchable to time remaining

Counter memory: yes

Program start locator/index/cue: no

Audio dub: no

Video dub: no

Auto rewind: no

Linear audio: mono

Hi-Fi: no

Accessories: carrying handle, shoulder strap, RF converter unit (with 1.5 m cable), antenna cable and balun, A/V input

cable, A/V input adapter, A/V output cable, battery pack, AC adapter/charger, earphone, and internal clock batteries

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 250 lines

S/N, video luminance: 44.4 dB, un-

weighted; 47.0 dB, weighted

S/N, chroma AM: 40.8 dB

S/N, chroma PM: 36.4 dB

Audio frequency response: 80-12,000

Hz, +1.1/-3dB; 40-12,000, -10 dB

S/N, audio: 38 dB

Audio distortion: 1.7%

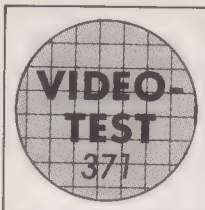
Overall picture quality: very good

Audio quality: excellent/very good by linear audio standards

Ease of operation: excellent/very good

Overall performance: very good/excellent

Minolta Compact VHS Camcorder



Serious video buffs have long harbored doubts about the Compact VHS, or VHS-C, format with its 20-minute cassette. Its

praiseworthy automation and compactness have been achieved at a sacrifice of picture quality and manual control. The advent of HQ (High Quality) brought an increase in picture quality. Now Minolta offers the CR-3000S AF Minolta Movie with HQ, its own optics, shoulder operation, and a character generator.

Minolta's version of a Compact VHS camcorder is important because it is the first to offer some of the features and conveniences previously available only in 8mm, Beta, and full-size VHS camcorders. The most obvious are the shoulder support, an optional manual iris control, and a titler able to superimpose up to 3 lines of 18 characters each on the lower portion of the

picture. We wish Minolta had given it a solid state image sensor instead of a Saticon tube, but it still delivers a recognizable picture at 15 lux. Its other features equal or exceed the capability of its Compact VHS competitors, which are growing in number and variety.

Description. Though some other Compact camcorders are red or gray, the Minolta CR-3000S AF is black. It weighs 4.5 pounds; the battery and cassette bring shooting weight to 5.5 lbs. Ready to shoot, the camcorder measures 6-3/4 inches high by 8-1/2 wide by 14 long. It sits easily on your shoulder and the swiveling viewfinder lets you shoot above or below the horizontal while keeping your head at a comfortable angle.

A pad cushions the side against your face. Further forward are a slider for manual iris control, with auto control at the center click-stopped position, and the auto/manual auto focus (AF) switch. The AF switch may be pressed even lower for one-shot AF, after which it pops back in to manual.

Above these switches is a touch pad area for the character generator. There are pads for on/off; move, which selects the character position; and reverse and for-



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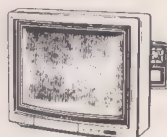
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Videotests

ward pads for cycling through a set of capital letters, numerals, and punctuation marks. You can superimpose up to three lines of 18 characters each, including spaces, near the bottom of the picture.

On the right side, away from your face, are the cassette hatch, multi-pin video/audio in/out connector, and mini jacks for an earphone, an external microphone, and a remote control. Further forward are stepped controls for playback and the counter.

The orange power button is furthest toward the rear and has ridges on three sides. Buttons with rounded edges bulge slightly above the surface for play, pause (yellow), eject (blue), stop, fast forward (search), and rewind (search). The red record button is recessed slightly to prevent accidental operation. Also in this area is a slide switch for selecting the SP or EP recording speed. Playback speed selection is automatic.

The run/pause button is in its usual position at the back of the handgrip, where your thumb can easily reach. There's no padded thumb rest but there is enough space to rest it next to the button when it isn't pushing it. On the upper surface is an unusually shaped but comfortable zoom rocker. Further forward is a spring loaded white balance lock. Continuous auto white balance is normally on but the lock switch freezes the current setting. The word "lock" on screen tells when it is engaged.

A white window at the front is for the white balance sensor, and one that looks black, actually dark red, is for the infrared auto focus. The grip wraps partly around the lens, leaving room for manual focusing and zooming. The zoom ring has the usual stubby lever but the lock for the macro range is on a separate flip-out lever below the lens.

The electronic viewfinder hinged to the left side of the lens cowl swings up and swivels up and down for easy viewing. On the flip-up hood is an adjustable magnifier to compensate for differences in eyesight. A second fixed magnifier enlarges the picture on the two-third-inch CRT so the image looks bigger than it really is. We wish more manufacturers would follow Minolta's lead.

Operation. Since the camcorder offers many manual options it may sound complicated to use, but that's not the case. The only automatic function you may miss is fading, which is not present in automatic form. However, auto fade is often a mixed blessing. The fixed speed of the automatic circuit is frequently either too fast or slow for the situation at hand. If you're sophisticated enough to think about fading, you'll want to control its speed. You can do that with the Minolta's manual iris control, as well as compensate for subject contrast—which you can always leave in automatic. The auto focus works smoothly but shares the weaknesses of all IR systems faced with highly reflective surfaces and

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Videotests

certain regular patterns. It is normally in auto white balance unless you lock it for special lighting conditions. So, for practical purposes, it behaves automatically.

You have to choose the record speed and prepare a title if you want one. The title is retained in memory and stored or recalled by pressing title on/off. The memory clears if you power down or hold down the move button and press on/off. Otherwise, the camcorder is very simple to operate: set it to auto everything, power up, put in a cassette, and shoot. The manual has enough basics to get started but you may

have a few questions. Minolta forgot to note that battery life is about one hour. Overall, the camcorder's operation is excellent, but the manual could be a little more complete.

Performance. The CR-3000S AF has a surprisingly good picture with one small limitation. Its horizontal resolution is 240 lines, but if tiny objects, like the finer lines of a test pattern, get too close there can be a little color shimmer. Otherwise, it is the best Compact VHS VCR we've tested.

It has an unweighted video signal to noise ratio (S/N) of 44.7 decibels and 48 dB

weighted at SP speed; it's slightly lower at EP speed. Chroma AM S/N was 45.4 dB at SP and 42.2 dB at EP, the best we've measured for any Compact VHS. Chroma PM S/N was 38.6 dB at SP and 36.4 dB at EP, about average.

Search and still picture are very good at EP, for which it is optimized, but as much as half the frame can be noise during SP special effects. Since we rate the picture in normal play mode, we rate it as very good/excellent, but if special effects during playback at SP are important, you should lower that rating to very good.

Audio is recorded on a linear track in mono only. However, compared to other linear track mono recorders it is very good, with a -3 dB audio frequency response of 100 to 10,000 Hertz at SP and 100 to 6300 Hertz at EP with a 42 dB S/N ratio and 1.3 percent total harmonic distortion. That's very good by linear track standards.

Conclusion. Minolta has taken Compact VHS camcorders a big step forward, even though it uses a Saticon tube instead of a solid state sensor. The shoulder support, the titler, and the manual iris option add to its comfort and flexibility. Its video and audio performance put it closer to the performance level of full-sized VHS HQ camcorders. Its 20-minute cassette length at the better SP speed is still a bit of a drawback, but you can't have everything, at least not yet. Of the Compact VHS camcorders we've tested so far it is the leader.

Test Report:

Minolta Movie CR-3000S AF Compact VHS Camcorder

DATA

Date of test: August 1986

Suggested retail price: \$1667

Weight: 4.5 pounds, 5.5 lbs. with battery and cassette

Dimensions: 5-3/8 x 5-1/8 x 12-5/8 inches (h x w x d) without battery and EVF

Power requirements: 9.6 VDC

Power consumption: 9.4 W nominal

Image sensor: 1/2-inch High-Band Saticon tube

Lens: f1.2, 6x (8.5-51 mm) power zoom with macro focus

Filter diameter: 46 mm

Minimum focusing distance: 3 feet exclusive of macro

Field at closest focus: 3.3 x 2.5 inches, tele; 15 x 20 inches, wide angle

Minimum illumination: 15 lux, rated; 22 lux for 50 IRE units, measured (50 IRE units delivers 50% of maximum contrast)

Auto focus: yes, switchable to manual

White balance: automatic, with lock

Iris: automatic, switchable to manual with a fully closed position

Sensitivity: single range, 15-100,000 lux

Viewfinder: electronic 0.7-inch CRT with onscreen indicators for camera operation, focus area, low battery, low remaining tape

Viewfinder controls: optical focus for magnifier, electrical focus, and brightness

Auto fade: no

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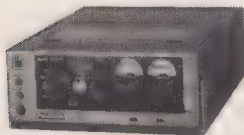
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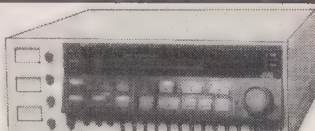
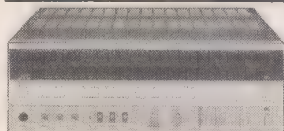


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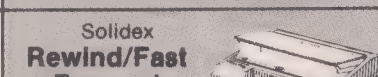
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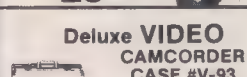
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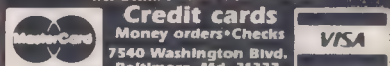
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Cable length: none
Plug: none
Jacks: multi-pin A/V input/output, mini phone for mic, earphone, and remote run/pause
Tape format: Compact VHS
Tape speeds: SP, EP
Play speed select: automatic
Still frame: yes, fairly noisy at SP
Frame advance: no
Slow motion: no
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: 3x, SP; 7x, EP
Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: 105/75 seconds for TC-20 cassette
Remote pause: yes
Remote: wired run/pause on 16-foot optional cable
Separate eject: yes
Counter digits: four
Counter memory: yes
Program start locator/index/cue: no
Audio dub: no
Video dub: no
Auto rewind: only in play mode
Linear audio: mono
Hi-Fi audio: none
Accessories: supplied—1-hour battery, AC adapter/charger, RF adapter, video/audio output cord, video/audio input cord, earphone, cassette adapter, SHG Compact VHS cassette, detachable handle, and carrying strap; optional—hard case, car cord, remote control, narrow-angle unidirectional microphone

RESULTS & RATINGS
Horizontal resolution: 240 lines, measured
S/N, video luminance: SP—44.7 dB, unweighted; 48 dB, weighted; EP—43.8 dB, unweighted; 47.9 dB, weighted
S/N, chroma AM: 45.4 dB, SP; 42.2 dB, EP
S/N, chroma PM: 38.6 dB, SP; 36.4 dB, EP
Audio frequency response: 100-10,000 Hz, +1.7/-3 dB, SP; 100-6300 Hz, +1.3/-3 dB, EP
S/N, audio: 42 dB
Audio distortion: 1.3%
Overall picture quality: very good/excellent
Audio quality: very good by linear track standards
Ease of operation: very good/excellent
Overall performance: very good/excellent

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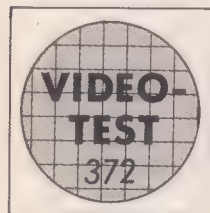
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Magnavox Designer Monitor/Receiver



All the video super systems we've seen to date require you to use the equipment of one manufacturer. The only exception is not a system but

GE's Command Central universal remote control. That lets you integrate different makers' video gear. Now, Magnavox is trying a different approach by supplying its new Magnavox Universal Remote with its top TV.

The remote has the control codes for all VCRs and infrared (IR) wireless, remote-controlled cable boxes built in. The remote lets you assemble a video system with a Magnavox TV, any VCR, and any remotely-controllable cable box. It is this remote that gives the Magnavox RG7290 its technical appeal, though fashion-conscious videophiles may be equally interested in the fact that it comes in 10 colors, designated by the two letters at the end of the model number. We tested a burgundy console and got good picture and good sound. The set also comes in ebony, dusty

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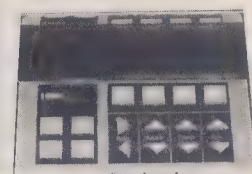
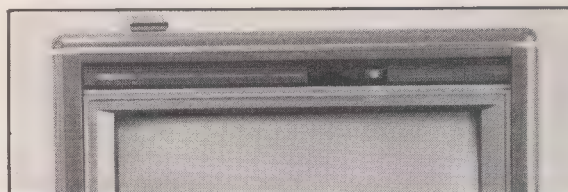
Above the picture tube, in a narrow band in the center, are windows for the remote and room light sensors, indicators for stereo, SAP, and the remote, the Power button, and an open/close button that exposes a panel of hidden controls.

On the top of the panel, or drawer, are most of the controls for the set. Three groups at the right are familiar to anyone with an MTS stereo TV. Furthest forward is a 10-digit keypad plus triangular buttons for up and down channel scan. The tuning buttons are on a silver background; those further back are on a blue background with a black field around each control. In the

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VCR controls: all—eject, stop, rewind, fast forward, play, pause, and record
Microphone: unidirectional electret condenser type
Character generator: 18 characters per line; 3-line format low in frame; 46-character set
Cable length: none
Plug: none
Jacks: multi-pin A/V input/output, mini phone for mic, earphone, and remote run/pause
Tape format: Compact VHS
Tape speeds: SP, EP
Play speed select: automatic
Still frame: yes, fairly noisy at SP
Frame advance: no
Slow motion: no
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: 3x, SP; 7x, EP
Visible FF and Rew: no

Fast forward/rewind time: 105/75 seconds for TC-20 cassette
Remote pause: yes
Remote: wired run/pause on 16-foot optional cable
Separate eject: yes
Counter digits: four
Counter memory: yes
Program start locator/index/cue: no
Audio dub: no
Video dub: no
Auto rewind: only in play mode
Linear audio: mono
Hi-Fi audio: none
Accessories: supplied—1-hour battery, AC adapter/charger, RF adapter, video/audio output cord, video/audio input cord, earphone, cassette adapter, SHG Compact VHS cassette, detachable handle, and carrying strap; optional—hard case, car cord, remote control, narrow-angle unidirectional microphone

RESULTS & RATINGS
Horizontal resolution: 240 lines, measured
S/N, video luminance: SP—44.7 dB, unweighted; 48 dB, weighted; EP—43.8 dB, unweighted; 47.9 dB, weighted
S/N, chroma AM: 45.4 dB, SP; 42.2 dB, EP
S/N, chroma PM: 38.6 dB, SP; 36.4 dB, EP
Audio frequency response: 100-10,000 Hz, +1.7/-3 dB, SP; 100-6300 Hz, +1.3/-3 dB, EP
S/N, audio: 42 dB
Audio distortion: 1.3%
Overall picture quality: very good/excellent
Audio quality: very good by linear track standards
Ease of operation: very good/excellent
Overall performance: very good/excellent

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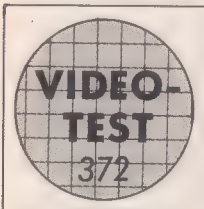
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Magnavox Designer Monitor/Receiver



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Description. The RG7290, in all of its colors, carries echoes of the art deco look with its straight lines and rounded corners. Its recessed base lets it swivel about 20 degrees in either direction, so you can place it where it looks best then twist it for a better viewing angle when needed. It weighs about 155 pounds, and measures 35 inches high by 29 inches wide by 19-3/4 inches deep.

Its 27-inch picture tube dominates the front; there is no extra layer of glass in front of the tube. The frame surrounding

the picture is medium brown. Below, a dark brown fabric covers two sets of speakers for right and left channels. Each speaker channel uses a six by four-inch woofer and a two-inch tweeter.

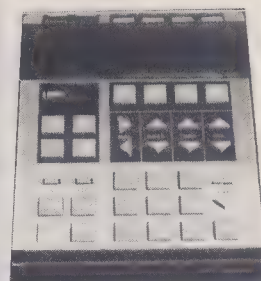
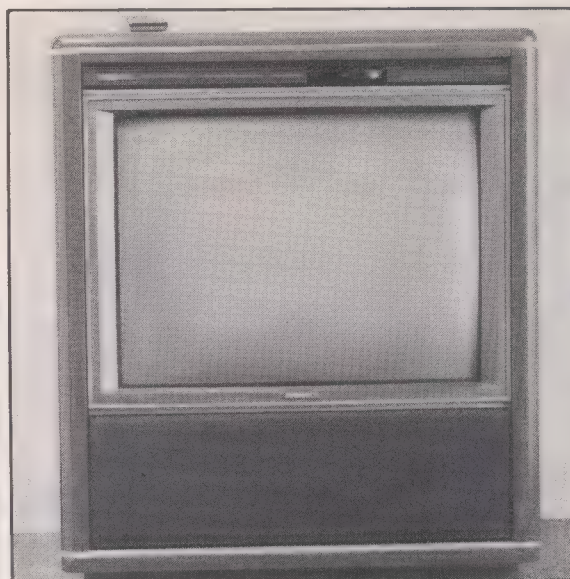
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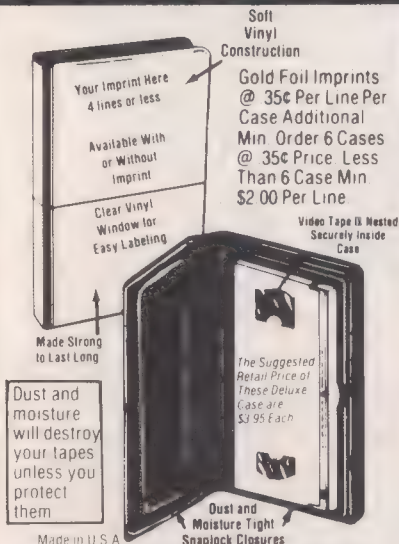
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Videotests

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The set is almost overshadowed by its remote control. Both carry the designation "Star," which they share with all Magnavox top-of-the-line sets using the MX/3000 chassis. The remote, also available with other models, uses its own model number TUAB5G-MA01. Many other TV remotes control VCRs, but none that we know of have the control codes for virtually every IR remote-controlled VCR ever made. Even better, it will control virtually every current IR remote-controlled cable box; Magnavox believes it controls all such models but cautions that there may be a VCR or cable box its engineers overlooked.

A slide switch on both sides of the remote swaps the legends on about a third of its controls from TV to VCR functions. Furthest back on the black remote are three colored buttons for turning the gear on and off: red for the TV, green for the VCR, and yellow for the cable box. Next forward on a silver band are a 10-digit keypad, and buttons for TV/VCR and channel recall.

Operation. Using the TV is easy. Learning the less frequently used operations will take a little time because you have to remember both the control name and the procedure, even though they're very simple. The tricky procedures are setting up a preferred channel, setting the

parental control, captioning the channels, and setting the remote control for VCR and cable box control. However, setting up for VCR and cable box is simple: just turn on the device, hold down two buttons until the channels start to change, then release the buttons.

There are a few limitations worth noting. First, cable channels with numbers can't be selected directly from the remote, but only by touching the 100 button at the set. Second, despite the remote's sophistication, you must still go over to the set to modify brightness, picture, tint, color, and sharpness. We lowered our ease of operation rating half a point to excellent/very good because of these slight inconveniences. Two other mild inconveniences are the arrangement of the audio/video jacks at the back and the presence of only one A/V input and one output.

Performance. The picture quality is very good. Even though we measured horizontal resolution as nearly 400 lines, NTSC signals require less than 350 so the picture is as sharp as broadcast TV uses. You won't see 400 lines unless you supply a video signal with the extra high-frequency content.

Its other measurements include a luminance (video) signal-to-noise ratio of 44.6 decibels, a chroma AM S/N of 43 dB, and a chroma PM S/N of 41 dB. However, color accuracy was excellent, and whites were

brilliant at 12,000 kelvins. With the sharpness control at its midpoint there was only a little graininess, so we rate the overall picture as very good. If your signal sources are weak or noisy the graininess can become annoying.

Audio was modestly specified at 4 watts into 8 ohms from 100 to 20,000 Hertz at less than 1 percent total harmonic distortion. It exceeded all those specifications. If you're a hi-fi buff or a serious videophile, you know that good sound can be a great deal better. LV, Beta Hi-Fi, and VHS Hi-Fi all deliver signals ranging from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Part of the reason for the Magnavox's modest performance is the built-in speakers. They deliver the specified range only within 10 dB. The speakers were seen as the limiting factor, and Magnavox did not go to design an amplifier much superior to the speakers.

There are no terminals for external speakers. Stereo separation from audio sources was 52.2 dB; from MTS broadcasts, it was 31 dB. Audio S/N was 48 dB. The speakers are a little too close for wide stereo separation, but the Expanded Sound option helps a bit. We rate audio only as good with the built-in speakers, and very good at the fixed-level audio output.

Conclusion. The RG7290 does fill a specific gap in the market. Its color options and restrained art deco look provide sets that can blend in with many decorating



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Videotests

styles. Its performance is good/very good, and its remote control is very advanced. It is open listed but is comparable to sets in the \$1100 to \$1300 range. We're sure it will please many, but we cannot call this a videophile benchmark.

Test Report:

Magnavox RG7290BH "STAR"
Console With Universal Remote

DATA

Date of test: August 1986

Suggested retail price: open listed, \$1100 to \$1300 range

Weight: about 155 pounds

Dimensions: 35 x 29 x 19-3/4 inches (h x w x d)

Power requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power consumption: 192 W max.

Screen size: 27 inches, diagonally

Speaker size: one 6 x 4-inch woofer and one 2-inch tweeter for each channel

Type of tuning: quartz frequency synthesis

Method of tuning: programmable scan and direct access on both set and remote

Broadcast tuning range: 2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable tuning range: 122 channels—2 to 6, A to I, 7 to 13, J to W, etc.; 1 to 125, except 95, 96, 97

MTS stereo decoder: yes

MTS SAP decoder: yes

Remote control: Magnavox STAR which controls the TV plus almost every remote-control VCR and remote-control cable box in use

RF inputs: 3

Video/Stereo audio inputs: 1

Video/Stereo audio output: 1

Video/Stereo audio tuner output: none except selected input

Auxiliary stereo audio output: no

Headphone jack: no

External speaker connectors: no

Internal audio amplifier power: 4 watts per channel into 8 ohms, from 100 to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 1% total harmonic distortion, rated

Accessories: Magnavox Universal Remote and battery

RESULTS & RATINGS

Picture sharpness: 400 lines rated; 380, measured

Snowiness; S/N, luminance: 44.6 dB

Chroma AM S/N: 43 dB

Chroma PM S/N: 41 dB

Accuracy of colors: excellent

Overall picture quality: very good

Measured output power: 4.2 watts

Audio frequency response at measured power: 40-20,000, +/-3 dB, electrical

Total harmonic distortion at measured output: 0.8%

Stereo separation: 31 dB, MTS; 52.2 dB, A/V sources

Audio S/N: 48 dB

Overall audio performance: good on internal speakers, very good at audio output

Ease of operation: excellent/very good

Overall performance: good/very good

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LET THE GAMES BEGIN

continued from page 64

goan Joe Sedelmaier, television's reigning king of comedy ads. You'll remember Sedelmaier's work from spots for Wendy's ("Where's the Beef?") and Federal Express. You're probably less familiar with some regional spots like those for Alaska Airlines and Fiberglass Canada, however, and there's some pretty funny stuff. Sedelmaier's hallmark is his repertory cast of mutt actors—ordinary, but pained, human beings. The effect is like looking at a

Norman Rockwell painting in which everyone has gas.

We've complained about most of these games not using the video to offer playing instructions. This one does, but it doesn't do much good when they're delivered by none other than John Moscitta, the notorious "fast talker" from the Federal Express commercial. No fair!

The play-testers' consensus was that the game elements are fairly ordinary, though aided by a time limit (paced by the video) of 30 seconds per move. It's sort of a twist on the movements of *Trivial Pursuit*, with capturing the pawns substituted for collecting pie pieces.

The play-testers were bored by the board portion of the game, and stopped playing early on. Unlike the rest of the VCR games, though, everyone wanted to see the remainder of the cassette. By fast-forwarding through the 30-second spaces between them, we quickly knocked off the rest of the commercials on the reel.

You can play ten different games by using the additional question cards, so replay value is limited. But then so is *Trivial Pursuit*, right? *Commercial Crazy's* may be no bargain as a game, but the collection of Sedelmaier's work is terrific and, if it were a littler longer, the cassette alone would be worth the price.

NFL VCR QUARTERBACK

VCR Enterprises, Inc. \$38. Includes 144 cards, playing pieces, dice, a large game board, instruction sheet, and two-hour videocassette.

VCR Quarterback not only comes as the officially-sanctioned VCR game of the National Football League, but advertises "Winner of 33 Emmys" on the package. The latter refers, not to the game, but to NFL Films, the producer of the footage.

This football game is played by rolling dice and selecting cards for kickoff positions, penalties, passing and running plays, and occasionally consulting real NFL footage on the cassette. Video plays a minimal role in this otherwise traditional football simulation. Only half of the 98 play cards are marked "VCR," meaning you start the tape and look at the next play. Moreover, since there are two kinds of plays—ground-hugging and airborne, just as in real football—but only one videocassette, confusion sometimes erupts. You might pick a pass-play card that tells you to go to the tape, yet see a running play, instead. The explanation in the instruction sheet: "Your quarterback was forced to do something other than originally intended." Some excuse.

Our play-testers divided naturally on this one. The women had little or no interest. The men, on the other hand, played the game but, curiously, began skipping turns at the VCR, continuing to choose cards until they got one that didn't require the video. They agreed that, as a board/card game, it was fun but flawed, since you can neither select strategies nor defend your goal.

The footage on the video offers hundreds of playing situations, but because this is a linear program, the sequence never varies. Even though the instructions don't mention it, the play-testers thought that playing "video roulette"—randomly fast-forwarding or rewinding to a play—was a better idea than just starting and stopping the tape.

We also noticed one odd thing about the videocassette. It is a short tape (that is, a "big hub") cassette recorded at the six-hour SLP VHS speed. We concede that the vast majority of VCRs in homes today play slow-speeds but some older machines

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VGB1086

can't. As a result, too, the quality of the recording is relatively low.

By the way, VCR Enterprises, manufacturer of VCR *Quarterback*, claims to have invented the genre and independently marketed a game/cassette package before the success of Parker Brothers' *Clue*.

THE HONEYMOONERS VCR GAME

Mattel Toys, \$30. Includes 6 cards, 6 quiz booklets, 1 answer/score booklet, and 45-minute videocassette.

The *Honeymooners VCR Game* is a memory/observation game built around trivia questions about short scenes from the so-called "lost" episodes. Players view a scene, then answer two questions, and unscramble a jumbled word phrase based on dialogue in the scene. Bonus points are awarded for speed. A complete game consists of five rounds of viewing and quizzes.

Because these episodes, recently put back in circulation by star and producer Jackie Gleason, have had relatively limited exposure via Showtime pay-TV and videocassette release, they will probably be fresh to most viewers. Still, if you're a *Honeymooners* fanatic, there's nothing you haven't seen here.

It is difficult to take notes as you watch many of these clips. You're either trying to figure out the context of the scene (which is unimportant to game play) or laughing at the antics of Kramden, Norton, Alice, and Trixie.

GAME THEORIES

- Play on the floor so you can spread out. Some games, like *Flash Match*, just aren't appropriate for playing at a table. In any case, you're always going to have to accommodate the TV and VCR—which are probably in a fixed location—when playing one of these games.

- It is much—repeat, much—simpler to play any VCR game with a remote control. You'll just wear yourself out racing to the recorder without one because, except for *Commercial Crazies*, all the games we've seen require starting and stopping the tape. The "visual scan" feature of a VCR is almost a necessity with some games, as well. Remember that game designers are still trying to figure out just how to use video. Some of the VCR features are still somewhat awkward.

- Set your VCR's line/tuner (also known as TV/camera) to line (or camera). This way every time you stop the tape, the screen goes to black and silence. This eliminates the annoyance of another program suddenly appearing, and maintains interest in and concentration on the game itself.

- Don't wear out the fun you may be having by playing a game to death. Since VCR games are, for the most part, limited in their replayability, they lose value if you play them out in an evening or two.

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Our play-testers who liked trivia games enjoyed this one, but found the questions, particularly the scrambled word puzzles, too easy. Sample: "THAW do you XEEPT me to VIEG the boss when he gets here?" You don't have to know anagrams or palindromes to figure these out.

This lack of challenge didn't seem to stand in the way of the fun, however. While playing, a side game broke out where people asked each other their own *Honeymooners* trivia questions.

The replay value is limited. There are forty scenes, five per game, and three questions per scene. To get forty complete games from the set, you'll see each scene five times. (As with *Clue*, experienced players have an advantage over novices.) These are fast games, too, since each scene lasts about a minute.

Finally, *The Honeymooners VCR Game* is expendable. Since you write the answers in the quiz books, you can't even pass the game along to friends. This would have worked better if the questions had been furnished on cards, instead. No information is offered as to how additional quiz books can be obtained.

GAME SOURCES

Mattel Toys, 5150 Rosecrans Ave., Hawthorne, Calif. (213-978-6635).
Parker Brothers, 50 Durham Rd., Beverly, Mass. 01915 (617-927-7600).
Pressman Toys, 200 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010 (212-675-7910).
VCR Enterprises, Box 1548, Clarksdale, Miss. 38614 (601-627-4111).

FOURTH DIMENSION

continued from page 69

tening environment. It also comes with a remote control, a 100-watt amplifier, a center front channel, and a subwoofer output.

The 3601 also carries an unusual pedigree since its surround circuitry was designed by the father of quad, Peter Scheiber, who, as a bassoonist for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, first realized that providing stereo with only two channels of sound was "a waste." He saw that those two channels could actually carry information that would greatly expand the sound field and bring out the ambience of the original performance. This was accomplished via a matrix design Scheiber patented in 1971.

When quad hit the scene Scheiber and CBS became embroiled in a lawsuit over who indeed came up with the matrix idea first. Scheiber eventually triumphed and CBS became a licensee of Scheiber's design. But Scheiber wasn't impressed by CBS' use of his technology. Today, he blames the failure of quad on the simple fact that "the machines didn't work."

He even set out to prove that an audio matrix could be done correctly, though by the time his own device was marketed in the late 1970s, quad was little more than a

bitter memory. "There were too many mistakes," he reflected recently. "For one, the name quad gave people the wrong impression of what the effect was like." At the time, Scheiber conceded quad was dead but hoped that someday, someone would resurrect the idea.

ALIVE AND WELL

Dolby's introduction of surround in the early 1980s proved he was right. So much so that Scheiber again went to court to prove that Dolby's system was based on his patent. The suit was settled in Scheiber's favor. "Everything new in audio starts with the lunatic fringe," Scheiber explained. "You never know what is eventually going to catch on."

That Dolby Surround is quickly "catching on" is emphasized by the fact that Sansui, which has been selling a CinemaSurround system based on its earlier QS quad format, will be adding Dolby Surround as an option. While Sansui vice president Hiro Higashimori claims the QS rear channel is more definitive than Dolby, he concedes the decision is based largely on the widespread availability of Dolby software. "Quad killed itself because of multiple systems and because of the expense. That's not the case with surround. It is the extension of the industry demand for audio/video products," explained Higashimori. "Besides, the software is already in place."

With more movies and music videos encoded with Dolby Stereo every day, it is inevitable that there will be more opportunities to experience surround. New movies that will surely be Dolbyized upon their home video release include *About Last Night...*, *The Fly*, *Howard the Duck*, *Ruthless People*, and *Under the Cherry Moon*. However, consumers will still need to pay close attention to their purchases. Videotape and videodisc packaging isn't standardized. Most VHS tapes derived from Dolby Stereo films are now marked with Dolby's distinctive "double D" logo, accompanied by the words "Dolby Surround" or "Dolby Stereo." Several studios are now calling Dolby-encoded movies "Surround Sound" which, in most cases, is the same thing.

The Dolby Stereo process works with any home video medium: Beta Hi-Fi, LaserVision, even CED. However, these other formats seem less interested in identifying their surround properties. Dolby has a complete list of movies originally treated with Dolby Stereo. It is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Dolby Labs, 100 Potrero Ave., San Francisco, Calif. 94103-4813.

Note also that Dolby Stereo and Dolby noise reduction are different. A movie may carry a linear stereo track with Dolby B Noise reduction, but it still may not carry Dolby Surround information. VHS videotapes with the Dolby logo and the words "Dolby System" have linear audio tracks with B-type noise reduction, and are not encoded with Dolby Surround.

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The success of surround will depend on a software packaging code that is straightforward and easy to understand. Packing the entire hardware process on a microchip will also take the technology one step further, though Dolby engineers say it is already possible to enclose a complete decoder in a TV for a cost to consumers of only \$50 more.

This is especially important now that the first Dolby Stereo-encoded MTS TV shows have been aired. The prime candidate, at presstime, for the "official" debut was Steven Spielberg's *Amazing Stories*. However, those who have accidentally left their Dolby decoders engaged while listening to MTV in stereo have already discovered surround in such music videos as Madonna's "Material Girl" and the Talking Heads' "Burning Down the House."

The possibilities are endless. Peter Scheiber even predicts that Dolby Stereo will eventually bring quad back to audio, with the Dolby matrix incorporated in pressings of LPs, compact discs, and other audio-only products. "It's part of the continuing evolution of sound reproduction," he explains. "It won't stop with stereo."

Surround Sound Guide

continued from page 69

Sansui S-XV1000. A/V receiver with CinemaSurround (TM) reproduction, 2 amps (80-w/ch., 8-w/ch.), A/V signal processing, fader, dubbing, color correction joystick, 4 audio inputs, graphic equalizer, bass synthesizer, and theater and hall modes. Price: \$700.

Sanyo Dolby Surround. Dolby Surround decoder with matrix, concert, and hall modes; calibration control, and variable time delay. Price: n.a.

Shure AVC20. Integrated amp., surround-sound decoder, A/V switcher/dubber, 2 A/V tape loops, 3 modes (incl. Dolby), image enhancer, and noise filter, stereo synthesizer. Price: n.a.

Sony CDP-505ES. Digital surround-sound processor. L/R delay, Dolby, 3 delay memory positions, 5-position ambience mode, 15-w/ch. rear amp, and pink noise generator. Price: \$700.

Surround Sound SSI-360II. Dolby surround decoder with 4-way input switching/dubbing, 45-w/ch. amp, delay-adjustable simulated stereo/surround, center channel, and subwoofer output. Price: \$389.95.

Surround Sound SSI-720. Stereo/surround system with Dolby and music modes, mono enhancement, bypass, delay, 6 channel outputs, video source to amp. linking, subwoofer, and remote control. Price: \$599.95.

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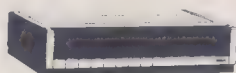
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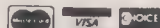
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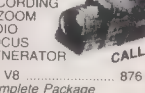


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T-120 HG PRO	7.99
Sony	
T-120 w/rebate	3.85
Our Brand	2.75
T-120	3.49

Magnavox	
Video Writer	Call
Multivision	Call
Digital Picture in a Picture	Call
Adapts to any TV	Call

Fisher

FVH 990	Call
FVH 960	Call
FVH 940	Call
670HF	689
VMT 400	Call
GE 9-7400	227
GE 9-7100	Call
Mitsubishi HS-421	Call
Mitsubishi HS-339	Call
Toshiba DX-7	Call
Toshiba M-5900	542
Toshiba M-5190	245
Magnavox VR 9560	Call
Canon VR HF720	749
Canon VR HF600	449
Canon VC 50 PRO	Call
Sony SLHF 750	Call
Zenith 4100	Call
Zenith 3200	515
Zenith 1825	Call
Sony SLHF 450	399
Sony SLHF 17	Call
Sony SLHF 900	Call
Sony SLHF 900	659
Sony Beta Movie	Call
Instant Replay	Call
PAL/SECAM Machines	In Stock

A TOUCH OF NOIR

continued from page 73

SELECTED VIDEOGRAPHY

THE MALTESE FALCON

1941. Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre; dir. John Huston. 101m. \$29.95. LV \$34.95. CBS/Fox.

THIS GUN FOR HIRE

1942. Alan Ladd, Veronica Lake, Robert Preston; dir. Frank Tuttle. 80m. \$39.95. MCA.

LAURA

1944. Gene Tierney, Dana Andrews, Clifton Webb, Vincent Price; dir. Otto Preminger. 88m. \$69.95. CBS/Fox.

MURDER, MY SWEET

1944. Dick Powell, Claire Trevor, Mike Mazurki; dir. Edward Dmytryk. 95m. \$19.95. Nostalgia.

SCARLET STREET

1945. Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett, Dan Duryea; dir. Fritz Lang. 103m. \$19.95. Kartes. \$29.95. Images.

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NINA HARTLEY... KARI FOXX... AMBER LYNN



TAJA REY... RAVEN... LAURIE SMITH



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These are the newest, most famous, adult film stars that have ever graced the pages of popular men's magazines in recent months. Each one of these gorgeous ladies appears totally uncensored in explicit action with the most dynamic supermen in adult films today. Featuring every form of swingin' and swapin' to scorch the silver screen ever!

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Each tape is recorded in high resolution video full color with complete musical score and shrink wrapped in their own boxes brand new from the factory.

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Canadians remit in U.S. funds. No foreign C.O.D.s.

☐ Send C.O.D. I enclose \$5 extra, plus \$3 p&h.

Please specify: ☐ VHS or ☐ BETA.

NAME (Print) _____

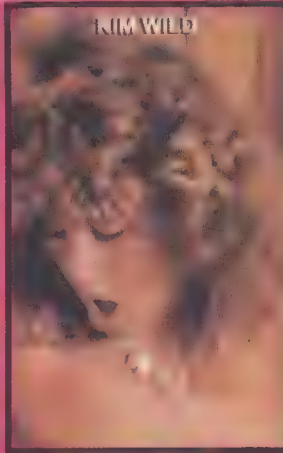
ADDRESS/APT.# _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Signature/Age/Date _____
I am over 19 years old and request this material.

30 MINUTE VIDEOS — Only \$2.50 each
HOLLYWOOD STARLETTS
IN QUANTITY

LET A SEXY, HORNY, BEAUTIFUL WOMAN TURN YOU ON WITH HER MOST INTIMATE SEXUAL FANTASIES



☐ Taja Rey ☐ Amber Lynn (pictured) ☐ Kim Wild (pictured) ☐ Kelly Richards ☐ Raven ☐ VHS or ☐ BETA
☐ Lois Ayres ☐ Sondra Stiltone ☐ Christy Canyon (pictured) ☐ Nina Hartley ☐ Kari Foxx

Our Fantastic Prices: ☐ Any One @ \$12.50 ☐ Any Five @ \$20 ☐ All Ten @ \$25

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CANADIANS REMIT IN U.S. FUNDS. NO FOREIGN C.O.D.'S.

☐ Send C.O.D. I Enclose A \$ 5 Deposit.

APO, FPO, Canadian & Foreign orders add 10%.

I am over 19 yrs. of age & request this material.

Name _____

Address/Apt.# _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Signature/Age/Date _____

FREE!! HARDCORE VIDEO TAPES

ALL YOU PAY IS THE FREIGHT CHARGES WHICH ARE ONLY \$1.25 EACH VIDEO

This is not a rip-off. We represent a consortium of video tape distributors who are looking for active buyers of hard-core material. They want to find a place you are so bad that they're willing to give their product away in hopes of future business. With this purchase you'll qualify for the low-so-what prices and biggest selection of hard-core videos guaranteed! This is a one-time offer. Once you purchase you'll never see these hard-pleas again. We're also the fastest shippers in the industry. We ship out your order the day it's received.



Our price is higher than what you can get elsewhere. That's right! And look for it to go even higher. And you can't find it in any other store. It's a one-time offer. Once you purchase you'll never see these hard-pleas again. We're also the fastest shippers in the industry. We ship out your order the day it's received.

SHIPPED IN 48 HOURS WITH CASH OR MONEY ORDER

YOU PAY FREIGHT ONLY ■ TWENTY VIDEOS ONLY \$24.95

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☐ Send C.O.D. I enclose \$5 extra.

Please specify: ☐ VHS or ☐ BETA.

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CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Signature/Age/Date _____
I am over 19 years old and request this material.

For additional information, circle No. 78 on Reader Service Card.

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- **NO SHIPPING CHARGES** on surface UPS orders over \$200.00 prepaid by cashiers check, money order or wire.
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C.O.D.



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Tabb, VA 23602

For additional information,
circle No. 81 on Reader Service Card.

THE BIG SLEEP

1946. Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Dorothy Malone; dir. Howard Hawks. 114m. \$49.95. LV \$34.95. CBS/Fox.

GILDA

1946. Glenn Ford, Rita Hayworth, George Macready; dir. Charles Vidor. 110m. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

THE STRANGE LOVE OF MARTHA IVERS

1946. Van Heflin, Barbara Stanwyck, Kirk Douglas, Elizabeth Scott; dir. Lewis Milestone. 115m. \$19.95. Kartes.

BODY AND SOUL

1947. John Garfield, Lilli Palmer, Hazel Brooks; dir. Robert Rossen. 104m. \$59.95. Republic.

THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI

1948. Orson Welles, Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane; dir. Welles. 87m. \$59.95. LV \$24.95. RCA/Columbia.

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER

1948. Barbara Stanwyck, Burt Lancaster, Ann Richards, Wendell Corey; dir. Anatole Litvak. 89m. \$49.95. Paramount.

HE WALKED BY NIGHT

1949. Richard Basehart, Scott Brady, Roy Roberts, Jack Webb; dir. Alfred Werker. 79m. \$19.95. Kartes. \$24.95. Images.

THE ASPHALT JUNGLE

1950. Sterling Hayden, Louis Calhern, Jean Hagen, James Whitmore, Marilyn Monroe; dir. John Huston. 112m. \$69.95. MGM/UA.

D.O.A.

1950. Edmond O'Brien, Neville Brand, Pamela Britton; dir. Rudolph Mate. 98m. \$14.95. Roach. \$19.95. Kartes, United. \$24.95. Images.

SUNSET BOULEVARD

1950. Gloria Swanson, William Holden, Erich von Stroheim, Jack Webb, Buster Keaton; dir. Billy Wilder. 115m. \$49.95. LV \$29.95. Paramount.

THE BIG HEAT

1953. Glenn Ford, Lee Marvin, Gloria Grahame; dir. Fritz Lang. 90m. \$59.95. RCA/Columbia.

WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS

1956. Dana Andrews, Rhonda Fleming, George Sanders, Howard Duff; dir. Fritz Lang. 100m. \$19.95. United.

CHINATOWN

1974. Color. Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, John Huston; dir. Roman Polanski. 131m. (R) \$24.95. LV \$29.95. Paramount.

THE CONVERSATION

1974. Color. Gene Hackman, John Cazale, Cindy Williams, Harrison Ford; dir. Francis Ford Coppola. 113m. (PG) \$69.95. LV \$29.95. Paramount.

NIGHT MOVES

1975. Color. Gene Hackman, Susan Clark, Jennifer Warren; dir. Arthur Penn. 100m. (R) \$69.95. Warner.

TAXI DRIVER

1976. Robert DeNiro, Jodie Foster, Cybill Shepherd; dir. Martin Scorsese. 112m. (R) \$69.95. LV \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE

1981. Color. Jack Nicholson, Jessica Lange, Anjelica Huston; dir. Bob Rafelson. 122m. (R) \$69.95. LV \$34.95. CBS/Fox.

THIEF

1981. Color. James Caan, Tuesday Weld, James Belushi; dir. Michael Mann. 123m. (R) \$69.95. CBS/Fox.

TRUE CONFESSIONS

1981. Color. Robert DeNiro, Robert Duval, Charles Durning, Burgess Meredith; dir. Ulu Grosbard. 108m. (R) \$79.95. LV \$34.95. MGM/UA.

BODY HEAT

1981. Color. William Hurt, Kathleen Turner, Richard Crenna, Mickey Rourke; dir. Lawrence Kasdan. 113m. (R) \$64.95. Warner.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

1984. Color. Jeff Bridges, Rachel Ward, Alex Karras; dir. Taylor Hackford. 122m. (R) \$79.95. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia.

BLOOD SIMPLE

1984. Color. John Getz, Frances McDormand, M. Emmet Walsh, Dan Hedaya; dir. Joel Coen. 96m. (R) \$79.95. LV \$34.95. MCA.

All the above are in black & white unless otherwise specified. Addresses for video companies can be found at the end of the "Directory," page 118.

STUMPING WITH VIDEO

continued from page 76

meeting halls and living rooms in 67 counties.

THE FUTURE

Partisan political organizers and media consultants are torn over the effectiveness and necessity of such videos, though they all agree we're going to be seeing a lot more of them. According to John Frew, "By 1995, about 60 percent of all television will be showing something on a VCR rather than network programming or cable. One ski boot manufacturer is using the Seattle market as a test. They put together a beautiful 3-minute videotape featuring skier Steve Mahre." They provided copies to

local video stores, gratis. "It's free, you just check it out when you check out another tape. I can see political ads going the same route," he says.

One major use for such videos this year was fundraising, both for individual candidates and political action committees (PACs). A producer for Washington-area political media concern Bailey-Deardourff says her firm has done videos for candidates to carry along when they go calling on money-givers. "In the past the spots were produced and the candidates took them to show supporters what their money was going for. Now, particularly if the candidate can't be there, this is a way to get the message to them live from the candidate. They needn't be as slickly produced and are much less expensive than broadcast-quality television ads."

Other consultants mention the use of a

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Finest Quality Hardcore Sex Mags & Videos

NOW AT DISCOUNT PRICES!

30 MIN. VIDEOS

Featuring your favorite centerfold girls in intense hardcore action! Each and every video is 30 mins. in length - total viewing time of 8 hrs. Guaranteed!!! All videos are in color, with sync sound & musical score.

\$1.50



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- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cherry Lane | <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Lovell | <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Lovell |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Lovell | <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Lovell | <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Lovell |

☐ Any 1 @ \$10 ☐ 5 @ \$15 ☐ All 16 @ \$24

PLEASE SPECIFY ☐ VHS ☐ BETA

BIG MAGAZINES



16 OF THE HOTTEST MAGAZINES ONLY \$19.95

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MIX & MATCH FOR GREATER SAVINGS

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☐ Send C.O.D., I enclose \$5 extra plus \$4 P&H
Please specify ☐ VHS ☐ BETA

NAME _____
ADDRESS/APT.# _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
Signature/Age/Date _____
I am over 19 years of age and request this material

VIDEO



Karl Fox

ONLY **\$1.95** EACH IN QUANTITY

CHECK YOUR SELECTIONS
EACH AND EVERY VIDEO IS 30 MIN. EACH, A TOTAL OF 8 HRS. VIEWING TIME WHEN PURCHASING ALL 16 VIDEOS. EACH TAPE PACKED IN ITS OWN BOX.

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ALL VIDEOS ARE 30 MIN. EACH, ALL COLOR, SYNC SOUND WITH MUSICAL SCORE & 100% UNCENSORED ACTION. ☐ VHS ☐ BETA

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☐ Send C.O.D. I Enclose A \$ 5 Deposit.

APO, FPO, Canadian & Foreign orders add 10%.

I am over 19 yrs. of age & request this material

Name _____

Address/Apt.# _____

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Believe Your Eyes!



60 MINUTE
**EROTIC
VIDEO
FANTASIES
FOR \$500
EACH**

WHEN YOU PURCHASE ALL EIGHT

NOW, ENJOY YOUR FAVORITE REAL FANTASIES WHEN COMING TO CENTER FOLD MODELS AND FIRST MALE SUPER STARS COME TOGETHER IN THIS COM PLETELY UNCENSORED VIDEO FANTASY COLLECTION! EACH AND EVERY VIDEO IS APPROX. 60 MIN. EACH IN COLOR & SYNC SOUND WITH MUSICAL SCORE - THE YOUR MINDS BATH.

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Rush Items Indicated. I enclose \$ _____ plus \$3 P&H ☐ CASH ☐ MONEY ORDER ☐ CHECK as payment in full. Canadians remit in U.S. funds. — No foreign C.O.D.'s. —
☐ Send C.O.D. I enclose \$5 extra, plus \$3 P&H

Name _____

Address/Apt. _____

City/State/Zip _____

Signature/Age/Date _____

video "prospectus" to raise money from PACs. Traditionally, campaigns have prepared slick print pieces to try and coax money from PACs. Now they may send over a tape instead. Video can also be used to recruit volunteers, by familiarizing them with the candidate and his or her ideas without having to meet one-on-one. Likewise, political home parties, similar to in-house lingerie displays, are also ripe for videos. Sent with or without the corporeal candidate, short tapes can be geared towards specific groups, from retirees to union members to stockbrokers. Perhaps they will one day supplant direct mail.


Jim Dunn is production manager at Washington's Harriman Communications Center (known as the Democratic Media Center until the late Averill Harriman donated \$650,000). The Center provides inexpensive production services for Democratic Congressional candidates; during campaign season, four camera crews and two edit bays run three shifts, six days a week. "Very few of our candidates are using much more than television spots this year," notes Dunn. "The longer videos are mostly for Senatorial candidates with more money. PACs come to us to do films on issues, say, balance of trade. Five different unions paid for that film, which we produced. They'll make about 200 copies apiece to send around the country to their different locals."

The woman responsible for the *Achievement 86* tape featuring Reagan and Frank Fahrenkopf is Pam Adkins. She says the Republican National Committee's use of videotape in the last two years has quadrupled. "We not only (obviously) use it for advertising and distributing our national, state, and local ads, but we have several in-house programs that use video on a regular basis," Adkins says.

"We put together tapes for use by our field staff, by our state party organizations, by county groups, by Republican support groups on subjects like ballot security, running for election, candidate recruitment, and fundraising," continues Adkins, who is the director of broadcasting and advertising for the RNC. "Any area where we get a demand from our constituents—for information, news, or how-to—we put together a tape and distribute it. We have seminars, host campaign management colleges, show tapes with a selection of advertising to teach people the various types of advertising that can be done during a campaign. It's a very sexy thing. People are certainly interested and have a tendency to pay more attention to a tape than a speaker.

"Let's put it this way," closes Adkins. "If a picture is worth a thousand words, then one videotape is worth a million."

What about 1988, with a presidential election looming? How big a role will video play in selling the candidates to America? Perhaps one indication came during Vice President George Bush's extended peace-keeping swing through the Mideast last summer, and before that on a trip to

China. Every step of the way, he was accompanied by a film crew paid for by his presidential campaign committee. 

ULTRA-TINY TVs

continued from page 84

same size screens. Among sets that use beam index CRTs are the Sony Watchman series, the Magnavox BF3900 and BF3901, and the Goldstar MBS-200.

POWER SOURCES

Compact TVs are designed for on-the-go viewing, so they can be powered in a variety of ways. All are designed to run off replaceable batteries—usually AA or AAA types. Use alkaline batteries for longer life, especially if the set has a CRT screen or a fluorescent backlight. If you do a lot of viewing, purchase a set of rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries and a recharger. Though the ni-cads cost more, they'll last several hundred times longer.

Most portable sets come with, or have as an option, an AC adapter, for use when you're close to a wall socket. If you're comparison shopping for tiny TVs, remember to add in the price of an AC adapter if the set doesn't already have one. Most adapters cost between \$10 and \$20.

Although you shouldn't watch reruns of *Happy Days* while riding in your car, most tiny TVs will also run off the car battery. You need an adapter to make the right connections. Most sets don't come with the adapter, so it's an extra expense.

TUNING IN

Tiny TVs use electronic tuning because it delivers more stable pictures and takes up less space than the mechanical tuning coils, slugs, and capacitors used in older sets. But though the tuning may be electronic, you still dial your favorite channels by twisting an old-fashioned knob, like you do with a pocket AM/FM radio. A little indicator moves across a scale, showing the approximate channel. A few sets, like the Casio TV-2000, have up/down tuning buttons. None have channel pre-sets, so going from station to station is a manual affair.

Although tiny TVs are designed for tote-and-carry viewing, a few can tune into more than the regular VHF and UHF channels. The Quasar UP1325YE has a cable-ready tuner, should you want to tap into a nearby cable outlet. Tiny TVs are equipped with telescoping walkie-talkie-type antennas. Reception is best if you use the set within 10 miles of the TV stations you want to watch. At that range, you probably won't even need to pull out the antenna, unless you're watching indoors. The further you live from broadcast stations, the more you'll need to tweak the antenna to bring in a good picture. Reception is marginal to poor for stations further away than 35 to 40 miles, particularly UHF channels.

THOSE LITTLE EXTRAS

Though tiny TV sets are already pocket-size—no mean feat in itself—some models come with added features that don't seem to take up any more space. They add cost, however, so if you just want a TV to watch on the go, buy a barebones model.

A number of tiny TVs come with AM/FM radios, including the Casio TV-60, the Goldstar KMA-0506, the Panasonic TR-1030P, and the Sony FD-30A. You switch between TV viewing and radio listening by a flick of a switch. Some models, like the Sony FD-45A, have FM stereo (but not MTS TV stereo). You listen to stereo broadcasts through headphones.

The Emerson BCR45, the Goldstar KMA-0401, the Quasar AP1495YH, and a few others have an AM/FM clock radio. You can use the set to wake up in the morning, or remind you to get back to work when watching TV during your lunch hour. A built-in microcassette, available on the Emerson VR50 and the Samsung BT-122AT, records and plays TV soundtracks or music. A few tiny TVs are built into do-all boom boxes also loaded with AM/FM radio, a high power amp, and single- or dual-drive cassette tape.

Baseband audio and video inputs let you use the TV as a monitor. The input jacks use eighth-inch phone plugs, so you'll need a miniature phone-to-RCA phono cable, or an adapter, to connect the TV to your VCR. The direct connection also lets you view already recorded videotapes, right from the VCR. Compact TVs with separate video and (sometimes) audio jacks let you use the set as a field monitor for a portable video camera. Attach a cable from the video out jack of the VCR to the video in jack of the TV.

WHAT PRICE TINY TV

In 1965, the Sony 4-203UW, with the 4-inch black & white screen, retailed for \$199. Today, \$199 also buys you a good quality black & white tiny TV with a 4- or 5-inch screen. Though the dollar price is the same, today's tiny TVs give more for your money. That \$199 in 1965 went a long way toward buying groceries, gas for the car, and rent for a reasonably nice flat (even in Manhattan). You know how far \$199 goes now.

The \$199 is about the average suggested price of a tiny TV, although most black & white CRT sets tend to be in the \$150 to \$175 range. Street prices are usually less. Color CRT and LCD sets range from \$250 to \$300 at list, although a few—like the cable-ready Quasar UP1325YE with a 3.3-inch screen—are more than \$380. The most expensive tiny TV is the \$469.95 Sony KX-4200, a component monitor/TV with two video inputs and a 3.7-inch CRT. It is expressly designed for use as a high-quality monitor for on-the-go videomaking.

Black & white LCD TVs comprise the low end of the the cost spectrum. The

EXCALIBUR

FILMS



Brothers Grime

Adult Cartoons



\$39.95

Starring: Princess Layme, Princess Orgasma, Pussy La'Mour, Medoosha, Mark Starkiller, Tar Yag, and Gonad, the Barbarian.

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Since we feel that this is clearly the best adult cartoon of all time, we guarantee that you will enjoy it completely! Period! If you disagree just send it back, no questions asked, and we will exchange it for the adult movie of your choice - all you pay is shipping.



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TOM HANKS

continued from page 88

his role as yup-and-coming advertising executive David Basner in *Nothing in Common*. "That is," Hanks explains in the third person, "having gone through something in life and then dredging it up so he can use it as the key to whatever emotion he's gonna have to go through in the role." In the film, Basner's parents are divorcing after more than 30 years, and father Max (Jackie Gleason) becomes hospitalized with advanced diabetes. This not being *Pagliacci*, how does the clown cry?

"My own parents got divorced when I was very young," says Hanks. "My father had been very ill; there were times I was sitting in a hospital room and thought this was the last time I was gonna see him. But [the movie] was not," as some have suggested, "a three-month experience of cinematic psychoanalysis for me." The dramatic scenes and the crying were the product of "relaxed concentration. I didn't want to make the dramatic scenes the big events of the movie for myself, because I had done that before, and failed miserably." Relaxed concentration apparently worked: director Marshall swears Hanks' tears were real.

Hanks' first nominally dramatic movie gave him "an opportunity to act in a much bigger, more obvious way than I'd been able to on any other gig. I've always tried to invest realistic emotion into whatever part it is and whatever movie it is, even something as innocuous as *The Man with One Red Shoe*, or as kind of stupid as *Bachelor Party*."

To hear Hanks tell it, comedy fans might be getting a bit rough for him. "There's a much greater risk in doing comedy," he argues, "because if you stink to high heaven, you know right away. You're out there much more on the line than you are in a drama. In a drama, an audience can sit very silently and you can have the biggest smash in the world. In a comedy, if they sit silently you're dead, DEAD, DEAD! Comedy is scarier and much more difficult. You can't really explain it."

COMEDY IS SERIOUS

A popular cliché: Young comedian who respects his profession still wants to play Macbeth. For Hanks, says Dowling, it's Edmund Tyrone, the decaying younger brother of O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*. The cliché, like most, is simplistic. There are no demarcation points between

the two, but rather, gradual shades where they meet. To Hanks, the farce and slapstick he purveyed from *Bachelor Party* to *The Money Pit* may indeed be hard for him to do.

Despite claims to the contrary, Hanks seems to realize this. "I was doing *Splash*," he recalls, "and Neil Israel and Pat Proft came to me with *Bachelor Party*. I said, 'I'm really busy right now, so just send [the script] to the people you send these things to.'" They tried to make it without Hanks, but it didn't work. "When I was done filming *Splash* they came back again specifically, I guess, wanting me and I said, 'Well, it's a rock'n'roll sex comedy, but there's some funny stuff here. There's something to work with, so let's do it. It was diametrically opposed to the kind of movie *Splash* was, so I had no qualms about doing it."

In most cases, such pursuit of variety is a good idea. But Hanks, in retrospect, was simply getting away from that part of the circle where he operates the best. And consciously he was fighting the spirit of farce and slapstick by trying to make cartoon characters too human. "For what are more-or-less limited roles," says Hanks, "I've been able to work in a lot of variety. It may be very hidden, very subtle variety," he admits, grinning, "but variety nonetheless."

VIDEO VALHALLA

continued from page 94

lates. "I'd like to get them and put a package together so you could see the whole evolution of the characters."

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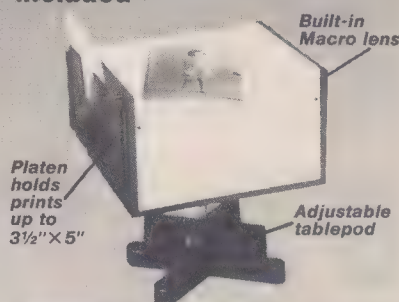
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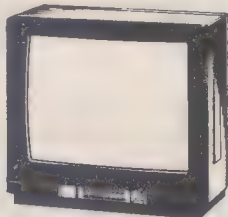
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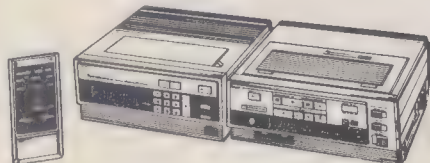
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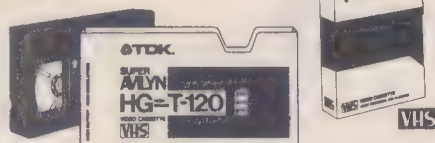


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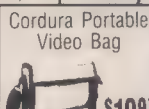
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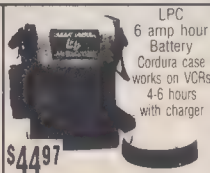
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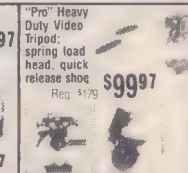
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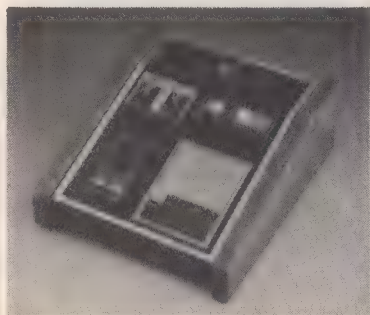
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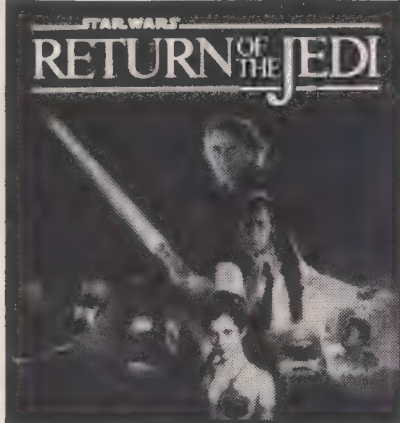
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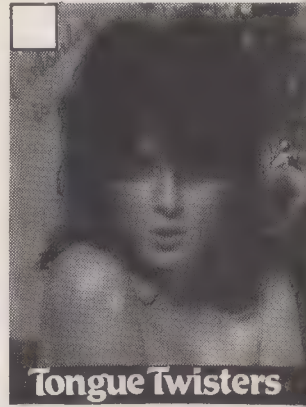
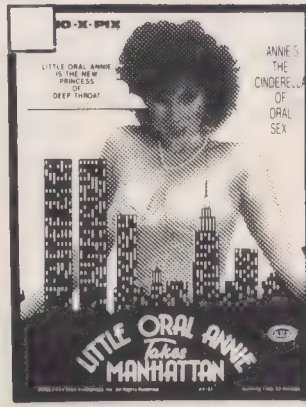
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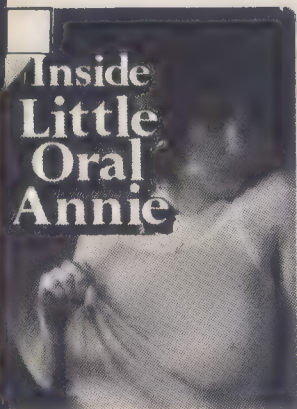
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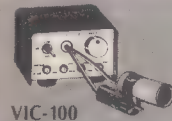
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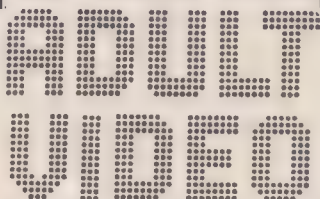
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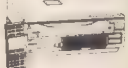
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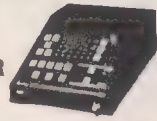
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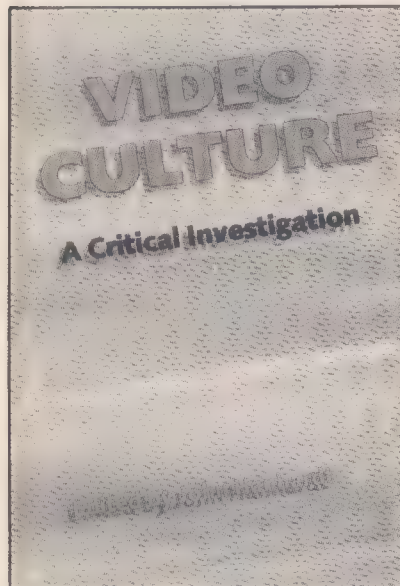
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Video Bookshelf

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Video Culture

edited by John G. Hanhardt
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Utah, \$19.95.

"There is no rewind button on the Betamax of life," says video artist Nam June Paik. How can one respond to such a statement? Either it's incredibly profound or idiotic. Your own response may determine how you react to *Video Culture*, an interesting but muddled analysis of the political and esthetic uses of video.

This is an anthology of essays by artists and critics who are trying to grapple with the role of video in shaping our subconscious responses to culture. Their premise is that broadcast television operates under strict ideological and political rules, and that it's the job of the video artist to break them and force audiences to question their conditioned responses.

Wolf Vostell and Nam June Paik first used television sets in their art in the early 1960s, about the same time Sony introduced the first portable video camera (the Portapak) in the U.S. The Portapak meant that video was no longer exclusively controlled by corporations like RCA and CBS; the individual could now experiment with the medium.

Paik exhibited his first video sculpture, "Exposition of Music-Electronic Television," in 1963. He distributed TVs randomly in a German gallery, manipulating their scanning mechanisms to scramble the broadcast images. Chairs were scattered through the space, while the sets were

marked up and cluttered with objects. Paik's sculptures forced the audience to regard TVs as artistic entities, rather than just a means of receiving entertainment.

Other influential Paik installations included "Magnet TV" (1965) in which a huge magnet was moved around a TV set, distorting the original signal and creating abstract patterns of light. Perhaps his most famous installation was "TV Garden" (1974-78), where 30 or so sets were placed in a gallery amid ferns and plants, creating a kind of electronic flora.

Many artists have since installed similar exhibits, often using the technology to place the audience itself within the art. Others, like Dale Birnbaum in 1982's "PM Magazine," take apart the signals from broadcast television and reassemble them in an attempt to decipher the medium's subliminal messages. Other videos combine elements of painting, sculpture, dance, music, theater, and film to produce a new hybrid art form.

Video Culture is best—and most readable—when it describes the more inspired work of these talented video artists, and allows them to explain the ideas behind their creations. Douglas Davis, in particular, aggressively balances the public activity of filmgoing with the lonelier, if more intimate, act of watching television. Paik (despite the goofiness of his Betamax comment) optimistically speculates on video's vast opportunity to link art with technology. And art historian Jack Burnham demands a fuller exploration of television's meaning as a tool for both communication and manipulation.


Unfortunately, *Video Culture* barely touches upon the

field's promising future. How will those who have controlled access to the airwaves for so long adapt to a society in which everyone is their own programmer? What kind of new art forms will we see when everyone has access to cameras, computers, special effects generators, or broadcast facilities? While many of the contributors have pioneered revolutionary uses of the technology, *Video Culture* dwells too much on their past achievements. Video art will surely become more pervasive in the years to come, and it's helpful to see what artists and critics are thinking.

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Movie Character Actors

by David Quinlan
Harmony Books, N.Y.,
\$24.95.

Here's one absolutely essential book for the video collector. Seems like every movie has one actor or actress in it you just can't quite identify, one whose face you've seen a million times but can't name, one who always contributes an enjoyable, if understated, performance. You know: "That guy playing the creepy boss in *9 to 5*—wasn't he in *On Golden Pond*? Or *Melvin and Howard*?"

You'll find the Dabney Colemans of cinema (along with the Brian Dennehy's, Harry Dean Stanton's, and Jack Elams) in this book, plus photos and filmographies for each. While this *Encyclopedia* isn't as complete as we'd like (Where is Denholm Elliott? Or Michael Moriarty?), it's a valuable supplement to *Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion*, and a lot of fun for idle browsers. 

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Off the Air

The Last Word

Cable's New Complication

By Bob Brewin

Here's a maddening scene: it's Christmas 1987 and you've just finished hooking together your new stereo cable-ready TV and cable-ready VCR to the cable convertor box with enough wires, plugs, jacks, pins, etc. to start your own telephone company. You bought the same brand of TV and VCR so you could use just one remote to control this media center. Then the cable-TV serviceman appears at the door and announces, "I'm here to install the A/B switch. Where's the antenna wire?"

Huh?

Don't get mad at the cable man. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) made him do it. Your nifty remote control has been rendered useless by the mechanical switch because of a recent Supreme Court decision overturning the way cable systems handle broadcast TV signals. From 1964 until 1986, cable systems were required to carry the signals of all local television stations.

In its early days, cable TV didn't have any problem meeting the requirement because it was essentially selling a clearer, crisper signal than viewers could receive from their antennas. But in the mid-1970s, the rise of satellite-distributed cable programs caused the cable industry to view this "must carry" requirement as interference in the new business of selling such services as

CNN and HBO. Many cable systems, particularly those mid-way between urban areas with numerous broadcasters, found there was little channel capacity for both broadcast and cable networks.

In the early 1980s a small cable system in Quincy, Washington and CNN started legal actions that led to the recent ruling. Quincy Cable and CNN argued that by giving preference to the broadcasters the FCC violated the First Amendment rights of the cable programmers and systems. The Court agreed and told the FCC that to keep "must carry" it would have to come up with rules that would not violate the First Amendment.

This panicked the broadcasters, who viewed cable systems as gatekeepers of their access to the TV. They argued that cable boxes hooked up to VHF terminals precluded access to any signal not on the wire. Throwing out must-carry, broadcasters said, would virtually give cable operators veto power over what viewers watched.

The FCC came up with a compromise that seems fair on the surface, but may be impractical. The A/B switch allows users to select signals from either the cable company or an antenna. Both wires lead into the switch and output into the VHF terminals of one TV. Theoretically, this allows viewers to use their antennas to pick up any off-the-air signals not carried by the cable system.

The solution ignores reality. What about the millions of antennas torn from roofs by cable installers? What about city viewers who need cable

to eliminate the ghosting caused by signals ricocheting off buildings? What about the signal loss caused by running wires through yet another connection?

The A/B switch also eliminates much of the convenience built into most new TVs and VCRs. Some manufacturers will build infra-red-controlled A/B switches into sets, but these are still rare. For the moment, cable's victory over broadcasters seems designed to frustrate its customers. It is a giant leap backwards that renders useless many features built into microprocessor-controlled video gear.


The FCC's ruling requires the cable companies to pick up the cost of the A/B switches for new and old subscribers. The companies must also install the switches for new customers and charge old customers a "reasonable" installation fee. The cable industry probably could drive a truck through so loose a word as "reasonable," raising the possibility of stiff charges for installation. The new ruling also does little for people who once bought cable for its promise to deliver signals clearly.

The cable industry assures its critics that the new rules do not mean viewers will wake up tomorrow and find their favorite broadcast channels gone from the wire. To an extent this is true: systems selling improved reception in areas that have poor over-the-air signals will probably continue to provide this service. So will cable systems with 54 to 70 channels, simply because they can't fill all their channel space with cable-only programs. But in the smaller systems

that much of America watches, viewers may soon see their favorite local stations bumped by cable networks.

In issuing its new rules, the FCC also acknowledged facts of cable life that could benefit consumers. It recognized that exclusive cable franchises constitute a de facto monopoly, and it began to study how to provide competition. One possibility strikes terror into the heart of the cable industry. The Commission is considering asking Congress to stop forbidding telephone companies from providing video services to homes. If this happens, frustrated cable subscribers will have an alternative and prices may drop.

The A/B switch is also designed to offer viewers an alternative. But viewers will have to invest in antennas and related hardware to take advantage of it. In many areas, just an antenna won't do. I predict a mini-boom in the sales of not only antennas, but amplifiers, signal boosters, quality coax, and home signal switchers. After going to all that trouble and expense, some cable subscribers may even decide to go all the way and put in a dish, preferring to pay their subscription fees directly rather than to a middleman.

The cable industry's lobbyists are generally pleased with their victory. Some of the operators have second thoughts, though. As Steve Dodge, chairman of American Cablesystem, told *Broadcasting Magazine*, "From a marketing standpoint, we are better off if the antenna is gone and the whole idea of off-air is not part of the customers' mindset." 

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